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RELIGION AND POLITICS IN BIRMINGHAM 1830 - 1850.

B.PHIL.

SOCIAL SCIENCES: APPLIED HISTORICAL STUDIES.

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## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

This study examines the manner and extent to which religious belief influenced political behaviour in Birmingham between 1830 and 1850. Political alliance and religious affiliation in the town became inextricably entwined in 1829 following Roman Catholic emancipation and the increasing pressure for parliamentary reform. Factional antagonism surfaced in parochial matters such as governorship of the local Grammar School, the appointment of a General Hospital physician and in national questions like the repeal of the Corn Laws.

The subject is explored in three ways: by examining narrative accounts of conflicts arising over such concerns as the payment of church rates; and the provision of education or opposition to pending parliamentary legislation allowing Dissenters to enter the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; by quantifying the religious belief and political party of those holding privileged positions of power and authority (Magistrates, Court Leet, The Street Commissioners who were responsible for paving, sewerage and lighting the town in the absence of a municipal corporation); by analysing polling in the parliamentary elections of this period, particularly those of 1837 and 1841, in order to establish the degree to which religious affiliation was a determinant of voting behaviour and its relationship to the other recognised influences; socio-economic class, neighbourhood norm, etc.,

The results indicated a positive relationship between religious belief and political acts: local privileged positions of power tended to be dominated by members of the Established Church to the exclusion of those dissenting from it. Despite a good correlation between religious belief and voting behaviour in the parliamentary elections, however, this part of the hypothesis could not be proved conclusively owing to the inadequacy of the sources.



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ABBREVIATIONS

BPU	Birmingham Political Union
BRL	Birmingham Reference Library
BTS	Birmingham Temperance Society
CSU	Complete Suffrage Union
HJ	Historical Journal
JEH	Journal of Economic History
L&CA	Loyal and Constitutional Association
MP	Member of Parliament
NCA	National Charter Association
RV	Rateable Value
UBHJ	University of Birmingham Historical Journal

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to examine the manner and extent to which religious belief influenced political behaviour in Birmingham between 1830 and 1850: an involved relationship, and one that created difficulties in distinguishing which was at issue. Birmingham had always been an open town: free of chartered laws, accepting those refused asylum elsewhere and by 1830 its population was divided more or less equally between Anglicans and Dissenters. Factional political alliance and religious affiliation became inextricably entwined, with religion invariably determining political allegiance. High-Church Anglicans believed that true Christianity was embodied only in the Established Church and were resolutely devoted to a continued union between church and state. The Dissenting creeds unilaterally distinguished between genuine Christianity and its political establishment. They were not in themselves a political party, but were unyielding in opposition to one demanding rates for an Established Church from which conscientiously but factiously they had succeeded which with parliamentary connivance excluded brethren from Oxford and Cambridge, refused them the privilege of celebrating marriages in their own places of worship and burial in an Anglican churchyard. The polarisation of political and religious opinion aroused bitter conflict in the town on occasions of impending parliamentary legislation and in parochial affairs such as the annual election of a people's churchwarden.

The repeal of the Test and Corporation Act in 1828 encouraged Dissenters to press for further parliamentary reform to redress their grievances. Their expectations were reinforced with the passing of the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. This measure caused a breach in the predominantly Anglican Tory party and for a few months disrupted previous party uniformity, when disgruntled Anglicans aligned themselves with the Radicals. Following the Reform Act the number of Tories elected to Parliament in December 1832 was small. Two years later in the election necessitated by the King's dismissal of his Whig ministers, the Tory party was still in a minority.

In Government the Whigs passed a number of measures favourable to Nonconformists including the commutation of tithes and the Marriage Act of 1836 which enabled Dissenters to marry in their own chapels as well as legalizing civil marriage with local registration of births, marriages and deaths. They established an Ecclesiastical Commission in 1836 which did institute some long-needed reforms within the Church of England, though many anomalies remained. Whigs still harboured a dislike of the Bishops for their opposition to the passing of the Parliamentary Reform Bill and the House of Lords opposed much of this legislation, finally killing the Bill to abolish Church rates in 1836.

The Whig Government did not fulfil all Dissenter's wishes while in power. For example, they did not sever the connection between the Church of England and the State. Indeed, Whig support in Parliament for the Dissenting cause did not survive the election of 1837. However militant Dissenters continued the cause themselves and in the early 1840s inspired local organisations like the Voluntary Church Society and Anti-State Church Association. In 1843 they energetically fought to retain their individualism in education in the face of attempts by Peel's Government to introduce grant-aided industrial schools, and they fervently entered the controversy over the so-called Papal aggression in 1850.

Birmingham politics for this period have been extensively examined by historians. Their results fall generally into two categories: general histories and historical journals. In the former the town's political activities are treated as contributions to the overall pattern in an approach to national politics, examining formative years of municipal incorporation and contrasting them with similar developments in other large towns. The latter, concentrate on particular aspects of the town's contribution to pressures for parliamentary reform through the Birmingham Political Union, the movement's dominating leader and local political polemics during the 1840s. Most include generalisations respecting local religious activities, acknowledging some aspect of Birmingham's religious pluralism, 'perhaps the greatest centre of middle-class Dissent'.<sup>1</sup>

The conflict between Established and Non-Established Church, particularly over church rates, expressed as 'an example of Political Union organization enabling Dissenters to unite for opposition'<sup>2</sup> has also been examined. The subject is nevertheless far from exhausted. In none has the extent of religious belief as a political force been measured or sectarian exclusion from positions of power and authority analysed, an omission doubtless related to admitted problems in establishing denominational affiliation.

Many early histories relied on a biography of Thomas Attwood by C.M. Wakefield written in response to a previous work A Century of Birmingham Life by J.A. Langford which accorded 'scant justice to Thomas Attwood', an omission Wakefield accordingly rectified: 'Great men had pressed for years the question of reform, no substantial progress in obtaining it was made until Attwood took the lead'.<sup>3</sup> Wakefield ignored any sectarian divisions and fostered the image of the BPU as a powerful, homogeneous body of like-minded men with a single purpose of parliamentary reform. Revised views emerged with later research. Asa Briggs suggests that 'there was a direct connexion between the economic structure and development of Birmingham and the politics of the city' and 'the origins of the Birmingham Political Union [was] embedded in Birmingham's economics and Attwood's politics'.<sup>4</sup> Only parliamentary indifference to the currency schemes forced Attwood to enlist other local discontented elements and embrace the cause of Parliamentary Reform. His first speech to the Union was indicative of his priorities: 'in the words of an indignant reformer, a small text of reform but...a ponderous volume of currency'.<sup>5</sup>

There is support for T.R. Tholfsen's alternative view that 'economic anxiety' was only 'partly responsible for middle-class radicalism', that 'social and religious antipathies also contributed to the angry and reckless spirit that animated the Political Union'.<sup>6</sup> He is however describing an established Union wrestling with the controversial objectives of factions which had created it, after having achieved their one unifying aim of parliamentary reform. Until





recently, the Union's function was never doubted, but the long recognised view in which 'the passing of the 1832 Reform Act... rightly established the importance of the BPU in the parliamentary reform movement'<sup>7</sup> is now questioned. It has been referred to as 'an artificial device designed for a single purpose',<sup>8</sup> and Carlos Flick contends that the Union 'was a local creation' which 'never transcended its provincial origins and character'. It was 'a myth in the Midlands that the Union acting alone by moral action had engaged distant oligarchs and had generated the movement in Britain for parliamentary reform'.<sup>9</sup> Flick bases his argument on the fact that the leaders of the Union remained 'relatively inactive during most of the agitation for the Reform Bill...but simultaneously to imagine that they commanded the entire movement in the nation by periodic declarations of principles'. This argument contradicts other historians' findings and the comments made at the time by politicians such as Lord Durham that 'the country owed Reform...and its salvation from revolution',<sup>10</sup> to the BPU. It is important to understand the various arguments concerning the gestation period of the BPU because these were formative years for many subsequent activities. Birmingham then stood at the apex of a dichotomous division; on one hand a faction demanding political and religious reforms, while on the other, 'a substantial segment of its upper middle class by virtue of its Anglicanism' and 'connexions with the neighbouring gentry'<sup>11</sup> were struggling to retain the traditional privileged structure.

This essay attempts an analysis of these two factions, investigating the degree of interaction between religious belief, class affiliation and politics. For most of the local population religion and politics was of limited involvement, confined to the opportunities of worshipping in church or chapel, or a spectator at a political meeting. Churches were middle-class institutions, so too were many Nonconformist chapels and meeting houses. In 1841 the population of the town was 182,922. There was accommodation for 26,200 worshippers in eighteen Anglican churches; 1,800 in two Roman Catholic churches and in thirty-seven Baptist, Calvinist,

Congregationists, Unitarian et cetera, chapels and meeting houses; but not including a Quaker Meeting House, there was room for another 27,500.<sup>12</sup> In 1848 the Curate of Saint Bartholomew in Birmingham, a predominantly working-class district, personally surveyed his parish of forty streets, 1,901 houses, 2,547 families, 9,336 individuals and discovered that 4,577 belonged to no denomination, 1,922 said 'they attended some place of worship regularly on Sundays, and 7,414 did not'.<sup>13</sup> In view of possible reluctance to admit non-attendance at church or chapel to a cleric, the figure of 'worshippers' was probably inflated, a fact confirmed by the religious census three years later when it was calculated that 'fewer than one person in ten attended either Church of England or Nonconformist worship on census day in 1851'.<sup>14</sup>

Between 1830 and 1850 Birmingham embraced most of the country's known religious beliefs: the High Churchmen and moderate Anglicans accounted for approximately half the population of the town, the various Dissenting beliefs the remainder. High Churchmen and Anglican clergy were ardent Tories, vehemently opposed to the triple alliance of infidelity, liberalism and Papistry. In 1830 the Anglican Church in Birmingham was belatedly trying to come to terms with the rapidly increasing population by a planned programme of church building. Its clergy still enjoyed the benefits of pluralism, non-residence and sinecures; self-righteous and over solemn they remained remote from all parishoners, other than the wealthy. Over the twenty-one years of this study these attitudes gradually changed largely as a result of parliamentary and church reform and the natural replacement of older clergy by younger ones more attuned to changing times. Dissent was eminently respectable and energetic in Birmingham, with many middle-class Dissenters compensating for their exclusion from privileged positions by a fervant devotion to their business. Many of Birmingham's leading manufacturers were Dissenters, there were some practising solicitors, bankers and a number who termed themselves gentlemen. The two largest Dissenting beliefs were the Unitarians and Baptists; the former, the wealthiest of the Dissenting groups, were politically active

though many tended to be Whigs rather than Radicals. Fewer Baptists were enfranchised and generally they were a less wealthy sect than the Unitarians: those that were politically minded were strongly Radical and a large number were manufacturers. Quakers were a smaller body but what they lacked in numbers they compensated for in wealth. As a socially exclusive sect active in considerations of conscience like the Birmingham Temperance Society and Anti-Slavery, a high proportion were traders in the town and many also had a separate residence in Edgbaston. There were a large number of Congregationalists who tended to be mostly of the underprivileged classes, comparatively few were enfranchised and they were not politically active. There was a large body of Wesleyan Methodists in the town and the question whether they should be classed as Dissenters was a point often raised. Particularly preachers of the Society seemed to consider themselves more akin to the Anglican Church and were involved in many Anglican activities. The number of Roman Catholics was 'inconsiderable compared with the whole population of the town', though their ranks were swelling rapidly both by birth and immigration. The size of the Jewish population in Birmingham was perhaps 'not more than two hundred and fifty'; and the remainder such as Primitive Methodists, Associated Methodists, Calvinists, Members of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, Scotch Church and others were comparatively small and few were enfranchised.

Politics like religion, was essentially a middle-class involvement and a parliamentary election in Birmingham involved no more than five or six thousand of the male population. The working classes possessed no constitutional means of political expression, their only power lay in non-electors combined pressures, boycotting of tradesmen and the militant potentiality embodied in their numbers. 'Both contemporaries and historians have accorded to parliamentary elections the premier position in the field of political activity'. 'An election was an occasion for a symbolic act of identification... It provided an opportunity for the assertion of class, interest or group loyalty'.<sup>16</sup> As far as this study is concerned parliamentary elections represent the maximum measurable

involvement and should provide the fullest indication of the political division within the town. For most of the electorate the voting process represented their entire political involvement. Historians' arguments alternate between the view that electoral politics was an 'emotional safety-valve allowing government to continue with little interference',<sup>17</sup> and a belief that elections were little more than 'festivals of beer and bribery'.<sup>18</sup> John Vincent goes so far as to state that 'the real issue was not parliamentary representation of the Borough, but the relative positions of the electors within the town'.<sup>19</sup> Others cite the circumvention of the voting process as an indication of the serious level at which politics was considered'.<sup>20</sup> Finally with the upsurge of urban political studies, the relative importance of parliamentary elections as a facet of political history at local level has become debatable; elections are seen as but one political act in a continuing saga of political activity, albeit a fundamental one.<sup>21</sup> Voting represents an elector's political involvement and was a gesture of loyalty to the cause which often necessitated enduring physical attacks to perform. Through the dimensions of parliamentary elections, the conflict of religion in the political structure is given a wider perspective. The ulterior motive of bringing advantage to one's religious belief, underlies much election involvement. 'One can serve Christ in the polling-booth or on the platform in Parliament, in the Town Council or on the Board of Guardians' according to R.W.Dale,<sup>22</sup> a local Dissenting Minister. An even smaller number of the middle class held power and authority over the town's institutions. It is maintained that two classes of people appear in all societies: a minority class that rules, and a majority class that is ruled with the first performing all political functions, monopolising power, and enjoying the advantages that power brings. Sociologists consider socio-economic class a powerful agent for access to such positions of power and an important determinant in forming voting preference. But in Birmingham during this period evidence suggests religion was also an important factor.

My hypothesis is based on three premisses, first a positive relationship between religious affiliation and many political

acts in Birmingham between 1830 and 1850. Second, that privileged positions of institutionalised power and authority were dominated by members of the Anglican Church with other religious beliefs purposely excluded. And third, religious belief might have been a more important determinant of voting behaviour than socio-economic class.

To establish this argument necessitates examining heuristically the social and religious composition of local ruling bodies and searching for evidence of explicitly sectarian exclusion from particular appointments, either arbitrary or statutory. In addition, it is essential to scrutinise public statements of position holders like politicians, Court Leet officials and religious ministers, analysing, within the confines of available sources, religious affiliation and the socio-economic class of activists (candidates, voters, non-voters, non-registered) for the six parliamentary elections held in Birmingham from 1832 and until 1850.

Narrative and quantitative material was needed to test the validity of the hypothesis. Poll books were available for two Parliamentary Elections: 1837 and 1841: both only provided the voter's name and address with the candidate for whom he voted. Neither listed those who registered but did not vote, whom it was possible to identify only for 1841, by checking the 1840 Borough Register of Electors with voters. Trades were found for approximately 80 per cent of the electorate in Wrightson and Webb's Birmingham Directories for 1835, 1837 and 1839 and Pigot's 1841/2. Municipal Rate Books for October 1840 provided the various rating districts, rateable values, rates paid and those ratepayers entitled to vote in 1841. Several local newspapers, with varying political leanings, circulated in the town. A large number have survived, though there are obvious dangers in unconditionally accepting their views, they nevertheless provided invaluable narrative material. Difficulties of finding individual religious denominations were expected and proved an obstacle not entirely overcome; in this respect those of the Anglican Church were more forthcoming than those dissenting from it. The final yield was a workable figure of a quarter of the Radicals in 1837 and 1841 and two-thirds of the

Tories in 1837 and nearly half in 1841. To achieve this a variety of sources were consulted, such as church and chapel registers, reports of denominational meetings, functions and subscription lists. One document for example itemised two hundred and fifty Anglicans who signed a protest to the High Bailiff against being called upon to assert their rights in a Dissenting Meeting House. Fluidity of religious affiliation was recognised and for this reason religious beliefs declared at marriage ceremonies, for instance, were ignored. The sources consulted, although leaving some activists' religion unknown, at least ensured that those forthcoming were devotees of their particular faith.

Party-labels are deceptive because their meanings change; to avoid confusion of terminology I have attempted in this study to follow the terms of the period. In 1830 the main political factions in the town were 'Radical' and 'Tory', though the former often referred to themselves as 'Reformers' an umbrella term sheltering several political persuasions and also holding connotations of church reform. In the middle were a minority of 'Whigs', though at times the dividing line between Radical and Whig was often obscure. The term 'Reformer' faded with the ideology in the late 1830s to be subsumed for a few years by the title 'Radical'. In the early 1840s the term 'Whig' increased in popularity simultaneous with the growth of the local party, though as the decade passed 'Liberal' replaced 'Whig'. Radicals and Radicalism were descriptions used less and less, at least within the confines of the political activists of this study. However, to obviate problems of analysis; particularly in collating votes in the parliamentary elections, the term Radical or Liberal has been used throughout; the term Whig is only used in the early period when Whigs were a separate political entity. For the opposite faction Tory not Conservative was the name employed for individuals and party during the period. By 1850 Conservative had not achieved current usage; High-Tory or Ultra Tory was also a description in use, particularly in 1829 for Attwood and his currency advocates and those disenchanted with Roman Catholic Emancipation. The Tory party was often referred to as 'The

Loyal and Constitutional' or 'Church Party'. The Anglican Church was occasionally called the Established Church and those affiliated as Anglicans or Churchmen, whilst Dissenters were referred to as Nonconformists or Free Churchmen. To obviate excessive description within the essay itself details of the important persons mentioned in the study are provided in Appendix 4. However when the activist's religious belief or occupation are considered essential to the understanding of the narrative, these are given when he is first mentioned, i.e. George Edmonds, Baptist, Attorney's Clerk.

The interpretation of socio-economic class is a controversial point embracing a persons wealth, social position, how he is regarded by other people and above all occupation. Arguments can spill over into definitions of class and status, involving the philosophies of Marx and Weber, to name but two, and how later sociologists have interpreted their particular writings. In Weberian terms class is a question of power or potential of the individual in relation to the production or acquisition of goods, whilst status is concerned with and aligned to the modes and patterns of the consumption of wealth: status is prestige or social honour. With the maximum number of activists in this essay being only the electorate of approximately five thousand, too sophisticated a class model seems unwarranted. In addition, this electorate was entirely middle class; there were no aristocracy and few if any working class, other than self employed artisans. True most models have at least two gradations of middle class, but I feel there is no need to utilize the 'Five class model' R.S.Neale suggests 'can accommodate the 'real' social structure of towns like... Birmingham'.<sup>23</sup> Some measure is obviously necessary to test the hypothesis, I have therefore analysed the two elections by occupational class groupings adopted from a contemporary source, which stratifies in rank order i.e. 'Clergy, Gentry, Bankers, Merchants, Manufacturers, Traders and other Inhabitants of Birmingham'<sup>24</sup>

The Parliamentary Borough of Birmingham after the Reform Act of 1832 included not only the Parish of Birmingham, but also those of Aston and Edgbaston. These three parishes were



however separated for parochial matters like churchwarden elections and payments of church rates. Within the confines of this essay the term Birmingham includes the parishes of Aston and Edgbaston; only when a separate issue arises which is peculiar to either Aston or Edgbaston, are these mentioned.

The problem created by Birmingham being a two member parliamentary borough with parties entering a different number of candidates for the elections makes an accurate view of each party's relative strength difficult to ascertain. A parliamentary election with two Radical candidates and one Tory allowed not only a double vote for both candidates of one party or a double vote for a candidate from each party, but also a single vote for one candidate. As there was uniformity in the number of candidates standing i.e. two Radicals or Liberals and one Tory in all parliamentary general elections until 1847, the mode of calculation adopted uses leading Radical or Liberal against leading Tory a method employed first by Derek Fraser for an analysis of parliamentary elections in Leeds and it is felt that this provides the most accurate analysis of the movement of opinion between elections.

- 1 Thompson (1972) p.79
- 2 Fraser (1976) p.44
3. Wakefield (1885) p.128
- 4 Briggs (1948)
5. Brock (1973) p.60
- 6 Tholfsen (1959)
- 7 Fraser (1979) p.84
- 8 Moss (1978)
- 9 Flick (1978) p.12
- 10 Buckley (1926) Quoted p.109
- 11 Tholsen (1959)
- 12 Showell's Commercial Diary for 1842, quoted by Birmingham Journal 18 December 1841
- 13 See correspondence of William Duncan Long M.A. Perpetual Curate of Saint Bartholomew. Aris's Birmingham Gazette. 17 April 1848
- 14 Inglis (1960) p.85
- 15 Smith (1830) p.330
16. Fraser (1976) p.178
- 17 Mitchell and Cornford (1976)
18. Hanham (1959) p.191
- 19 Vincent (1972) p.15
- 20 See Foster (1974) p.56 and Gash (1953) p.145 - 149
- 21 See Fraser (1976) p.178/9
- 22 Dale (1898) p.400
- 23 Neale (1972) p.5
- 24 A Poster issued following a meeting of 'Gentlemen, Inhabitants of the Town of Birmingham...on 13th January 1836' protesting 'against the Proceedings of this Self-constituted Body [BPU] Over 1,000 signatures appended. Original in BRL.

## 2 POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN BIRMINGHAM 1830 - 1850

### 2.1 1830 - 1832 Birmingham Political Union and Reform.

From January 1830 until December 1832 Birmingham's history is dominated by the activities of the BPU, formed for the purpose of achieving parliamentary reform. From its beginnings the BPU bore the hallmarks of a contrived coalition of diverse factions with currency formulists its most powerful group; albeit small. However as Derek Fraser points out, it is not always fully appreciated that the BPU 'was much more than a successful extra parliamentary pressure group',<sup>1</sup> it became deeply involved in local affairs. At its formation the Union resolved to 'prevent and redress as far as practicable all the local public wrongs and oppressions and all encroachments upon the rights, interests and privilege of the community'.<sup>2</sup>

Until becoming chairman of the BPU in 1830 Thomas Attwood held an essential Tory attitude towards British traditions. A former High Bailiff of the town, a position reserved for members of the Established Church, Attwood was always prepared to defend his Anglican principles. To justify his conversion to Radicalism; he maintained that it was the world that had changed rather than himself: a characteristic reaction of many Anglicans in the wake of Catholic emancipation. There is, however, evidence to suggest that had his currency proposals not been ignored by successive governments, he would not have been forced into a union with other factions seeking to redress injustices.

Although Birmingham Tories were opposed to separate parliamentary representation for the town, during its formative period the BPU capitalised on Tory opposition to Roman Catholic emancipation. Even an ultraProtestant like Joseph Allday, Editor of the Birmingham Argus backed its founding and talked of Radicals going 'hand in hand with the Tories';<sup>3</sup> a man who by 1832 was asking 'Protestant Electors of the Borough - is there any high born blood of your forefathers left in your veins?', and in reference to Attwood, dare you let yourselves be represented - by a paper currency monger!<sup>4</sup> Conversely the Whigs remained aloof, regarding the Union as politically

provocative and unconstitutional, also accusing Attwood of insincerity towards Reform by reason of his currency formula. Fifteen thousand people attended the Union's inaugural meeting. Attwood's opening speech produced 'in the words of an indignant reformer a small text of reform, but...a ponderous volume of currency' and according to Joseph Parkes, the influential Whig lawyer, 'the more opulent and influential public characters of the town'<sup>5</sup> kept away. Parkes did not join the Union because he objected to the currency proposals. The Radical George Edmonds, a Baptist and attorney's clerk, on the other hand contrasted the manly conduct of the Tories with the insincere dirty conduct of the Whigs. Many felt 'leading Whigs had particularly strong reasons for keeping clear of any such reform agitation' and in reference to the Street Commissioners and Court Leet, the Whig cabal, as the local Tories called it, represented the ruling group of the town.

The inaugural meetings of the Union exemplify the extent to which Attwood was compelled to draw upon outside factions. In May 1829 a petition to Parliament on currency reform was raised by Attwood, Charles Jones, G.H.Muntz, T.Clutton Salt, Benjamin Hadley and Joshua Scholefield. Scholefield was a Whig, the others Ultra Tories; five of the six were Anglicans. These six convened the inaugural Union meeting in December. Early in January 1830 the 'Declaration of the Union' was issued signed by 'thirty-six gentlemen'. Attwood, Scholefield and Muntz headed the list, in addition to the three original currency formulists, there were thirty newcomers, many were Radicals, many Dissenters, primarily Unitarians: it now included George Edmonds and William Pare. Edmonds had been an advocate of universal suffrage and vote by ballot since 1817. Pare was a local tobacconist, an Owenite Socialist and largely responsible for the launching of the Birmingham Co-operative Society in 1828. He was probably a Roman Catholic. The Union's activities alienated some of its original devotees, who were replaced by further Radicals such as that 'remarkable clergyman' and friend of the working class, Dr.A.S.Wade. A further 'Declaration issued in December 1831 capitalized on local distress by demanding 'effectual representation of the people

in the Commons', couching its currency ideas in vague phrases of seeking 'fair and reasonable profits of capital and industry for the middle classes, and the just and certain reward of labour for the workmen'. Notably it did not commit itself to seeking redress of religious grievances.

The BPU, by its very nature could never become a unified organization, consisting as it did of supporters from such diverse ideological backgrounds. Added numbers only created additional commitments. However, despite the factious alliance, the Union was soon spearheading attacks on traditional authority in the town, becoming increasingly autocratic and dictatorial in the process. Parliamentary reform was not the only objective, its tentacles of power were increasingly ingratiating into local politics, obligatory action if Dissenter support was to be retained. The association of religion and political action was exemplified in the affairs of the free local grammar school. In 1830 Union members actively supported Dissenter opposition to legislation restricting Governors of the King Edward VI Grammar School to members of the Established Church. The authorities were seeking enlargement of their powers, by inserting into a Bill before Parliament a clause directing that 'No person should be elected a governor who is not a member of the Established Church of England'. The Bill had passed its first reading in the Lords before local Dissenters became aware of the offending clause. After a petition was presented in the Lords by Lord Calthorpe, an Anglican landowner in Edgbaston, the clause was erased. This surreptitious attempt by the school governors soured improving religious relationships in the town where many of influence had been endeavouring 'to foster among people of all religious persuasions sentiments of mutual kindness and goodwill so comfortable to the precepts of the gospel'.<sup>6</sup> It was a bigoted and unnecessary action for all twenty governors were Anglicans already possessing 'the power of exclusion' which they had long exercised to the entire exclusion of Dissenters and continued to do so throughout the period, despite frequent opposition.

In the same year the Union entered vestry politics with the churchwarden elections at St Martin's Parish Church, gaining all positions - churchwarden, sidesmen and twelve trustees under the new Burial Ground Act. Resistance to them was neither strong nor co-ordinated: 'scenes of clamour and angry contention' drove away 'the respectable portion of reatepayers from taking part'<sup>7</sup> and incensed the staunch Tory rector Thomas Moseley. Opposition to payment of church rates created great interest in churchwarden elections as this parochial office held the power of authorising such a rate. Dissenters considered it highly unjust that every denomination should be compelled to afford pecuniary support for an Established Church. It was thought a gross violation of justice to compel a man to pay for goods which he had no possible use. Churchmen answered that a refusal to pay on conscientious grounds when a church rate had been levied could not be allowed for this would have the effect of superseding the authority of the law by the supremacy of private judgement. The rate levied in 1831 proved to be the last in the Parish of Birmingham, despite the churchwarden T. Clutton Salt's attempt to impose a rate in 1832 to the consternation of his Union colleagues. The Union's involvement with vestry politics was not approved by all its members: it certainly disturbed Joseph Parkes who disliked 'scenes of local division and agitation so adverse to good feeling and the real interests of society'. Parke's objective was parliamentary reform, he showed little sympathy for Dissenting grievances and none for currency projects.

Meanwhile the Union were distributing its edicts with force of law. Following the result of the 1831 Parliamentary Election, it resolved that 'the bells of the parish churches should ring in celebration'. Rev. Thos. Moseley refused the request and in consequence was stoned by a mob of bystanders. While the Union 'paraded with band and banners' a section of the crowd forced entry into the belfries of both St Martins and St Philips where 'bells of both churches afterwards continued to ring until late at night'.<sup>8</sup> Again with the Lords' rejection of the Reform Bill in October and constant talk of arming the Union, violent disorder seemed imminent when the churchwarden's

directive that black flags be flown from St Philips met with active resistance from the clergy. However, despite 'hostile remarks the Union prudently refrained from convening a meeting of the Populace'.<sup>9</sup> The Town meeting held to protest against the Lord's decision a few days later was mainly of Whig initiative and Attwood was not involved. 'A vote of thanks to him and to the Council of the Union...was withdrawn on the remonstrance of Mr Parkes who said it would create disunion'.<sup>10</sup>

In the aftermath of Earl Grey's resignation in May 1832 more Whigs entered the Union: several were Quakers who were attacked by Aris's Birmingham Gazette which regarded their action as an indirect violation of the advice of the Society of Friends. Quaker Joseph Sturge, though not pledging himself to defend all past proceedings of the Political Union, considered it a libel on their Society to impute those 'principles which forbid its members at a crisis like the present from associating with their fellow countrymen in any manner not inconsistent with the doctrines of the gospel'.<sup>11</sup> The Whigs' association with the Union proved of short duration: one hundred and three resigned in the following August, a much publicised mass withdrawal for which no explanation was given. Included were fifteen solicitors, seven surgeons and twenty-one merchants, suggesting that anything other than parliamentary reform for which Whigs had been themselves agitating could have jeopardised business interests. However political party labels are often ephemeral. Historians have labelled those resigning Whigs, certainly some were, Joseph Parkes and William Redfern a local attorney for instance, but many were Radicals, such as Joseph Sturge and the Jewish dentist Isaac Aaron. Like the latter, a high proportion were Dissenters, at least thirty-eight were known Dissenters, whereas there were only nine known Anglicans, though there was no suggestion that the mass withdrawal from the Union held any religious connotations. However it was for political reasons that the Union's Deputy Chairman Joshua Scholefield resigned following a bellicose public controversy with George Edmonds over nomination for the second Birmingham Parliamentary

seat; the first of many Radical - Whig disputes. Edmonds accused Scholefield of irregularity at meetings and the Union of 'worshipping wealth'; Scholefield always a moderate, never again participated in Union activities. Although there is no evidence of religious animosity in this quarrel, it does exemplify the problem constantly confronting the Union of maintaining a balanced policy to satisfy the diverse religious and political factions within it.

In the 1832 Parliamentary election there was no co-ordinated Tory resistance to the Radicals: Attwood and Scholefield were returned unopposed. Immediately after the Reform Bill was passed placards were posted proclaiming that representatives of Birmingham ought to be independent gentlemen, freely elected by the people, not nominees of an overbearing association and the stewards of a political club. On the other hand there were those who felt that the town was indebted to Attwood 'for its peace and good order at a time of great and unparalleled difficulty', though they did not agree with all his political opinions'.<sup>12</sup> Attwood ignored any reference to religion in his election address, but Scholefield pledged himself to distinguish between religion and a religious establishment. A month before the election Tories approached Horsley Palmer, a former Bank of England manager, who quickly withdrew through lack of support. Attwood later proclaimed 'that a large and Liberal Party...combined with the Tories' could 'not produce more than 600 votes'.<sup>13</sup> Tory passivity irritated its more active adherents, but all exhortations like those of Joseph Allday to the Protestants went unheeded. In contrast Radicals acted with the assurance of those granted an inalienable right to both Borough seats and there was certainly no evidence of reluctance to enter parliament on Attwood's part as he later maintained.<sup>14</sup>



## 2.2 Aftermath of Reform 1832 - 1850

The polarisation of middle class political and religious ideology into two opposing forces intensified after parliamentary reform. Conflicts arose over predominantly parochial matters like church rates, the triennial Guardians of the Poor elections, education and comparatively minor matters such as the appointment of a General Hospital physician and closing of a path around St Philip's Church. Those prepared to actively question established Christian dogma were in the forefront of the attack on local injustices: the BPU were involved in most of these conflicts. Its leaders however, often disagreed among themselves in trying to appease both a dwindling number of Whig supporters and the increasing militancy of the working class in its ranks. It was obvious even to the leaders themselves that the popular elements of the Union had become unmanageable. Only the one purposeful objective of Parliamentary reform had welded its multifarious factions together. The Union debated provocative issues, then passed ineffectual resolutions. Conciliatory efforts were made to keep it alive: 'the safest and surest mode of obtaining success [is] by asking for that which could be considered reasonable and tend to unite all classes in enforcing it'.<sup>15</sup> But what was reasonable for Whigs was unreasonable for the working class. The Union no longer held authoritative power, survival was its paramount consideration and the burgeoning Tories revelled in its predicament. Choosing to ignore an 1831 resolution that when Reform had 'been achieved they would cease to labour... in exciting the public mind to political objects',<sup>16</sup> the Union clung to their dwindling power until disbanding in June 1834.

In contrast to disrupted Radical harmony, Tory endeavours became increasingly unified. With the recently launched Birmingham Advertiser to cajole and support them, Tories were no longer content with spasmodic unorganised resistance. Considerably outnumbered in Birmingham, they banded together to provide a concerted counter attack against the Whig government's encroachment upon their traditional positions. High Churchmen had always harboured a fear that those who reformed Parliament would also reform the Anglican Church:

many recognised the necessity of reforming its discipline and revenues, but recoiled from supporting any positive action. In May 1834 Tories began organised opposition. Under the banner of the Established Church, they petitioned against the Whig Bill for the admission of Dissenters into the Universities, anticipating consequences 'most injurious to the moral and religious principles of youth...that the religion of Christ should not be deprived of the pre-eminence and influence which has been hitherto directed as they believe, in agreement with the word of God'.<sup>17</sup> Local Dissenters felt that the Universities were not 'the unalienable property of the Church of England...historically and in all justice they were National Institutions'.<sup>18</sup> In this they were supported by many Wesleyan Methodists in the town. Methodist support for a Dissenting cause was never united, and on this occasion they were forced to convene in a Baptist Chapel under a Baptist chairman, because their preachers had come 'to the conclusion that Methodists were not Dissenters and therefore had no grievance to complain of'.<sup>19</sup>

In 1833 a Dissenter, R.W.Winfield, was elected churchwarden, and re-elected in 1834. In the same year the church party endeavoured to impose a church rate by means of a poll, but were overwhelmingly defeated by 5,922 votes to 1,367. It is clear from these figures that opposition to church rates came not only from Dissenters, but also from a large number of Anglicans. The Tory Birmingham Advertiser expressed the indignation of all High Churchmen by referring to 'fellowship to papists, free thinkers, infidels and Jews...forecasting the entire destruction of the Protestant Establishment', and dogmatically instructing churchmen to 'act upon your principles or cease to make a public profession of them'.<sup>20</sup> However in 1835 the church party had its first success, albeit limited, opposing the election of a Dissenter as churchwarden on grounds of non-residence in the parish. The appointment was withheld. Radicals immediately instituted legal proceedings: John Winfield waited six months for a King's Bench decision before being allowed to take office. Inevitably, the following year's election was a turbulent affair: Radicals were

energetically opposed by the church party. After Winfield gained a majority of 171, Tories evoked the restrictive principles of the Sturge-Bourne Act, and after scrutineers had deducted non-eligible voters, John Brown a High Churchman, was declared elected with a ninety-nine majority.

In February 1837 Radicals organised a town-meeting supporting the Whig Government's attempt to abolish church rates. High Churchman Richard Spooner headed the Tories in a counter-attack against 'spiritual tyranny' and 'irreligious bigotry', determined 'that the Radicals' should not 'compromise the character of the town by their factious proceedings and that immediate steps should be adopted to meet them on their own ground'.<sup>21</sup> But, their own ground was a Dissenting chapel and the church party protested to the High Bailiff against being called upon to assert their rights in such a place. In the ensuing squabble, the Tories held their own meeting in protest and Radicals theirs to draw up a petition supporting the Bill which passed the Commons, but was defeated in the Lords.

Not all Radical supporters were prepared to actively oppose payment of church rates; the more subdued appear to have found the annual confrontation distasteful, as Joseph Parkes had done earlier. The inference being that these recalcitrants were Whigs reluctant to jeopardise any business connections. This was nowhere more apparent than in the affluent residential Parish of Edgbaston where there was little opposition to the levying of church rates. In 1835 several Quakers were taken to court for refusing to pay the rate: among them was Joseph Sturge who requested that his confiscated goods should be sold by auction, instead of being privately disposed. In 1836 Isaac Aaron with six other residents of Aston were charged for non-payment of rates. Their goods were seized for sale by a local Tory auctioneer, Barnabas Chesshire, who, owing to hostility from the crowd, refused to proceed with the auction. The impartiality of justice was not ideally exemplified when in court Richard Spooner, a High Church Tory, acting in the role of magistrate, enforced Established Church law by directing Aaron's goods to be sold by appraisement.

In the Parish of Birmingham the factious bickering continued every Easter. Rev. Thos. Moseley refused a churchwarden's election in 1837, having obtained an Anglican the previous year, he intended to keep him. Radicals regarded this as blatant manipulation of democratic freedom, and energetically began questioning the validity of the Rector's decision. At the meeting in St Martins there was much provocative language and violence. Moseley 'a timid nervous man seemed during the whole proceedings to have lost his wits'.<sup>22</sup> Muntz and Pare were brought to trial at Warwick Assizes on charges arising from the disorder and their implied acquittal seemed to change the character of these elections. It certainly affected Moseley's attitude and he now came under attack from both Radicals and Tories. In 1838, 'to the surprise and mortification of all his friends', he allowed BPU Secretary Benjamin Hadley to be elected on a show of hands despite proceedings being conducted under the Sturge-Bourne Act, and in the following year Hadley was re-elected at a very acrimonious meeting. It was reported that members of the Established Church, expecting a poll, stayed away because 'they had already had enough of being dragged through the mire by the Popish and Radical demagogues, into whose hands the Rector had to all appearances, either through weakness of nerve or weakness of churchmanship, unhappily resigned himself'.<sup>23</sup> Lack of unity in Radical ranks undermined their strength of former years. In 1839 doubts were expressed as to the legality of Hadley's appointment as churchwarden, following an incident at a Guardian meeting when James Brown, elected in 1836 claimed to be holding office. However, the objective of avoiding a church rate was proving successful so the fine balance of protocol was not too closely questioned.

In 1835 Radicals in Birmingham became very active in supporting pressures which resulted in the passing of the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act. In view of this, it was rather suprising that the same Radicals delayed until 1837, before taking the necessary steps to obtain a municipal charter for the town. Bunce<sup>24</sup> felt that this was the result of their involvement in parliamentary elections, but the

more likely reason was that they were acting on assurances from their political adviser in London, probably Joseph Parkes, that central government would automatically incorporate large towns and that no local initiative was necessary. Following the 1837 election, when no such legislative programme had by then been promulgated by Melbourne's Administration, Radical leaders moved into action with a petition to the Crown. It proved a highly controversial political manoeuvre. A counter petition was organised by the Tories who received support from several prominent Whigs, though the number of ratepayers who signed the rival petitions indicate that a majority favoured incorporation. Tories had long felt the town's increased wealth and active talent were attributable to the absence of a corporation, indeed a truism, but such talent consisted mainly of Dissenters who had entered the town because the 'Five mile act' did not apply; a fact Tories failed to acknowledge.

With hindsight the opposition to the seeking of municipal incorporation appears incongruous, but as Hennock points out 'it is explained by the fact that the municipal corporation was scarcely thought of as an administrative device'.<sup>25</sup> Radicals wanted a representative administration to replace the privileged order of Court Leet, Street Commissioners etc., controlling the town. Attwood 'regarded a corporation primarily as a device for petitioning parliament on the questions of the day, an extension of the Union, but with a recognised legal status'.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, the newly formed Corporation was soon to petition parliament for repeal of the Corn Laws; a move initiated by Joseph Scholefield and one which Joseph Sturge, now a Councillor, felt was not a 'political question'...and ought to be considered apart from all party questions.<sup>27</sup> The Corn Law petition was not only opposed by the Tories, but also by many Radicals both inside and outside the elected Corporation. Chartism was now strong among the town's working class. The Radicals of Duddleston ward felt 'that it would ill become the municipal representatives...to sanction the interested movements of the Whig Corn Law intrigues', and as a salvo in its Chartist cause, 'that the first political act of its corporate body should be in aid of the legal and peaceful movement which is now

being made by suffering millions to acquire their indefeasible right of suffrage'.<sup>28</sup> In the face of such opposition the petition in its original form was abandoned, though not before R.K. Douglas had written of 'a spirit of domination which a body elected as a Council is, ought of all things to avoid'.<sup>29</sup>

At this time Radical disunity was also very apparent in the Guardian of the Poor election, though on this occasion, the division had religious, rather than political implications. In 1834 thirty per cent of those elected had been Radicals: in 1837 determined efforts were made to become the majority. But a last minute attempt by Carr's Lane chapel to substitute forty-six Dissenting Whigs such as the Cadbury Brothers for Attwood, Hadley, Douglas and others destroyed Radical chances of sweeping the board; though they did achieve a majority. Carr's Lane Dissenters insisted that the nominees, whom they wished to replace were too involved in other activities to devote time for Guardianship duties. A plausible argument; exemplifying again the independent attitude of the Dissenting factings who often must have felt their grievances were overlooked in the pursuit of extraneous political objectives. Radicals were naturally incensed, not directing their venom at Dissenters by name, but rather at those 'individuals in the Borough calling themselves Liberal, not large enough to be able to do good, yet sufficiently large to do injury'.<sup>30</sup> The discord in Radical ranks allowed Tories to win nineteen seats they would not otherwise have gained. Radicals exaggerated the Carr's Lane Dissenters' action far beyond its importance: there were one hundred and eight Guardians and despite the nineteen Tories, Radicals still held a substantial majority. Guardians levied the poor rate which like church rates was an issue affecting people's pockets, and consequently a subject of constant antagonism between the two political parties. After the Radicals had gained office in 1837 there was considerable bickering about 'immoderately high' charges by the outgoing Tories and accusations of Guardians 'gorging night after night in one room while the paupers were pining in another'.<sup>31</sup> Such charges did not apparently impress the electorate, who in the see-saw of electoral fortunes, gave

the Tories a landslide victory in 1840 in a low poll.

Low polls favoured the Tories. In the churchwarden election two weeks later, Tory John Boucher polled two hundred and thirty-two votes against Benjamin Hadley's sixty six. Radical supporters were at this point greatly disillusioned with local politics and not enthusiastic over vestry elections, a malaise that was evident in the higher echelons too, with the Roman Catholic priest Reverend T.M. McDonnell the only prominent Radical supporting Hadley. In 1841 McDonnell was again the only Radical leader present, parochial politics no longer interested many of the former activists like Muntz, Salt and Douglas who were embroiled in Currency and Corn Laws. A Tory churchwarden was elected; trouble seemed imminent when the Archdeacon hinted at the enforcement of a church rate by a writ of mandamus which would hold the churchwarden liable for legitimate expenses should the rate fail to be enforced. A poll was taken later that year, when 7,281 voted against the rate, with only 626 in favour; providing the anti-church rate lobby with over three times the majority of the 1834 poll. Again it would seem that most Anglicans were swayed by their pockets. The Birmingham Advertiser recently saved from bankruptcy by wealthy Tory Churchmen, accused the clergy of 'timidity', and fiercely attacked the Quakers, particularly Joseph Sturge who had threatened to publish the names of those voting for a church rate. A further ignominious attempt to impose a rate was made in February 1842 which finally defeated an issue that had been gradually dying since the last rate was imposed in 1831 - though the Parish of Aston levied a rate in 1842, and in Edgbaston a poll in 1843 was in favour of imposing a church rate. In the following years few people attended the churchwarden elections in striking contrast to the crowd and turmoil that formerly characterised these meetings. By 1847 Reverend J.C. Miller had replaced Moseley at St Martins and at his first vestry meeting he declared his determination 'not to be the Rector of a Party, but of the Parish'.<sup>32</sup>

Synonymous with church rates, excitement for the Guardian of the Poor elections also diminished with the years; though the fluctuation of political fortunes continued unabated. It

became an issue largely ignored by local newspapers, other than publishing the results. In 1846 only three hundred and seventy-five ratepayers voted and not until 1849 did Guardian elections generate any interest, when those calling themselves 'Ratepayers' - a euphemism for economists - composed mainly of the shopocracy romped home. The socially progressive character of the town was now lost. Financial stringency was this party's election appeal: their first action was to throw out plans for the new workhouse proposed by the previous Guardians. One of the main activists on the Guardian Board now, was ultra Protestant Joseph Allday, himself a shopkeeper.

During the 1840s new issues came into prominence creating similar political and religious contention that church rates had done in the 1830s. The development of education was just as difficult to accomplish as Church reform, the main obstacle to its progress being religious dogmatism rather than lack of political initiative. Contending parties made no progress because Dissenters insisted on religious liberty and Anglicans were reluctant to relinquish the control they already held, by granting even minor concessions. This was evident both at Government and local level. Locally the Anglican Church and the Tories dominated the King Edward VI Free Grammar School charity, which accepted substantially less pupils from Nonconformist families than it did from Anglicans;<sup>33</sup> and the Blue-Coat Charity School acknowledged that the only worthy recipients of charity [were] the children of the Church of England'.<sup>34</sup> Dissenters had their own education system,<sup>35</sup> mainly confined to Sunday schools; Unitarians were the most advanced in providing schooling facilities and had already opened a Mechanics Institute in 1826, condemned by the Tories as a 'hotbed of sedition'. The educational plight of those in the poorer districts of Birmingham was exemplified by the findings of the Curate of Saint Bartholomew where in 1847 there were nine hundred and fifty-six families with children of school age, of these children from two hundred and thirty-five families had no education whatsoever, and those from two hundred and seventy-six others only went to Sunday schools, where they were instructed only in the rudiments of the



scriptures and elementary reading and writing. Earlier sectarian antagonism had predominated in a society formed in 1837 to promote general improvement of education in the town, but religious bigotry over-rode demands for a schooling system and it was noticeably unsuccessful in its objectives. Congregationalist Minister Reverend J.A. James 'took an exception to the institution of offices...as not fairly representing the different denominations in the town' and Reverend Moseley felt 'constituted as it was of gentlemen entertaining such diversity of religious opinions he did not see how they could agree upon any system of education of which he could conscientiously approve'. <sup>36</sup>

The same obstinacy permeated national politics. In 1843 Peel's Government's proposals for compulsory education of factory children in grant-aided trust schools failed because Dissenters considered themselves inadequately represented. Fundamentally it was again a question of religious liberty. In 1846 the minutes of the Committee of Council in Education raised similar storms of protest. Local Nonconformists were sure that the grants provided under the scheme for building schools would give all the advantages to the Established Church. Nonconformists were distrustful of Peel's motives and were certain that his ultimate aim was the destruction of Nonconformist educational institutions. They did not accept that equal advantages were being offered to Church and Chapel schools, particularly as Roman Catholics and Jews were excluded from participating altogether. At a large local meeting Joseph Sturge attacked as 'unconstitutional' the plan which would interfere with the maintenance and progress of civil and religious liberty', <sup>37</sup> pointing out that 'there was not a single member of the Committee of Education who was not a member of the Established Church. In the following year the controversy flared again, but did not reach the same degree of intensity in Birmingham as it elsewhere, particularly in the West Riding of Yorkshire where Joseph Sturge stood for parliament in the election of that year.

Between 1839 and 1842 Birmingham became heavily involved in the Chartist agitation; but after William Lovett and John

Collins, a local tool maker had been arrested in the town and Attwood had presented the petition in the Commons in July 1839, enthusiasm wained. Chartism finally destroyed the BPU and left few politicians in the town prepared to call themselves Radicals. Most diplomatically assumed the name Liberal, and when Chartism surfaced again in 1842 few of the former middle-class Radicals acknowledged its existence. Religious societies in the town did not become involved with Chartism to the extent of their Northern counterparts. The reactions of Anglicans were hostile and in the atmosphere 'of impending revolution at the time of the Chartist National Holiday in August 1839 a collect appointed to be used in times of war and tumult' <sup>38</sup> was read in several churches in Birmingham. Other than the Unitarians, religious denominations had little regard for Chartism. With the 1842 petition to Parliament pointing out 'that upwards of nine millions of pounds per annum are abstracted from them [petitioners] to maintain a Church Establishment from which they principally dissent' and which contrasted the 'Revenues annually swallowed up by the Bishops and clergy' with 'the conduct of the founder of the Christian Religion', the Anglican Church's hostility was understandable. A Chartist Church teaching practical and simple Christianity flourished for a time at a chapel in Newhall Street under Arthur O'Neill and John Collins. This was fiercely attacked by Feargus O'Connor for standing outside the NCA and dividing the movement. The chapel was used for a Chartist meeting in January 1841 when permission for a meeting in the Town Hall was refused by the Street Commissioners. In 1842 when Joseph Sturge attempted to reform a middle and working class alliance in the CSU he received strong support from Thomas Swann, a local Baptist Minister, who called 'on the middle class and the working class to unite against a 'common enemy' namely 'a tyrannical overbearing aristocracy...who were unfitted for anything great, noble and religious', <sup>39</sup> otherwise Nonconformists stood aside from involvement with the CSU. Fearing further encroachment upon their elitist sanctity Anglicans held in dread any increase of the suffrage, so when Chartists organized a Sunday meeting in 1848, there were vehement cries of Sabbath desecration.

The subject of Sabbath desecration arose again the following year with the proposed Sunday opening of the London Post Office to facilitate the despatch of mail to Birmingham in time for Monday morning delivery. The reverence in which the middle class held the Victorian Sabbath can be measured by their furious reactions when they considered its sanctity was being breached. The Rector, Churchwarden and parishioners of St Martin's Church supported by some Nonconformists protested to the Prime Minister; Joseph Sturge spoke of 'the well being of the nation' depending 'on the due observance of the Sabbath', whilst the new Rector J.C. Miller hoped 'that everything connected with political feelings... would be laid aside'.<sup>40</sup> It was not a stormy meeting that followed, but it split usually powerful attachments: it split the allegiance of the town's two MPs, both Anglicans, Muntz opposed the opening, Scholefield supported it, the Rectors of the two main churches St Martins and St Philips took opposing sides, whilst Reverend Samuel Bache a Unitarian supported the opening, Reverend J. Angell James a Congregationist opposed it. Proving above all else that Nonconformist unity for political ends was no longer a factor to be relied upon.

Nothing exemplified this latter-day Nonconformist disunity more than the various attitudes to Roman Catholicism. From Tory High Churchmen the reaction was predictable, In 1843 Reverend Moseley discontinued his connection with the General Hospital following a performance of Rossini's 'Stabat Mater' at its fund raising music festival, a composition Moseley described as 'most idolatrous and Antie Christian'.<sup>41</sup> Dissenters were again divided over Peel's endowment of the Roman Catholic College at Maynooth. Finally there was the outburst of Protestant hysteria in 1850 occasioned by a Papal Brief issued by Pope Pius IX, re-establishing the Roman Hierarchy in England. Antagonism in the town reached a peak not seen for several years. The enthronement of a Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham had passed peacefully a few weeks earlier 'with no less than twelve gentlemen formerly Ministers of the Anglican Church attending' and Aris's Birmingham Gazette suggesting 'it is probable that its importance' - the new Roman Catholic hierarchy - 'is over rated by the

English clergy'.<sup>42</sup> In the next few weeks this attitude hardened considerably, even the former moderation shown by Aris's Birmingham Gazette evaporated: 'since the Revolution of 1688 the public feeling has never been so put to the test'.<sup>43</sup> With The Times suggesting 'pretensions to resume the absolute spiritual domination of this island which Rome had never abandoned', some six hundred leading townsmen headed by Richard Spooner, demanded a town meeting. Now Dissenters disagreed among themselves as never before. On one side Joseph Sturge and George Edmonds continued their political partnership and were supported by Baptist Minister George Dawson in proposing there should be no legislative interference. On the other side, Reverend J.A. James teamed-up with Spooner to differentiate between 'No Popery' as a political cause, as the signal for popular vengeance and the cry of 'No Popery' as a religious one; as expressive of our detestation. It was a time for pointing out the ephemeral nature of former alignments, as when Edmonds reminded Spooner that he had once been a Radical and had presided at a meeting in favour of Roman Catholic emancipation, but that was before 1830 and in the last twenty-one years, much had changed.

In this section a positive relationship between religion and political acts in the town during the 1830-1850 period has been demonstrated. The connection resulted mainly from the cleavage between Anglican and Nonconformist beliefs and the latter's efforts for comparable religious status which Anglicans fervently opposed. This conflict involved political action both in and out of Parliament. Prior to 1840 Dissenting grievances were expressed through Radical politics, or rather Radical politicians; afterwards Dissenters' agitation for redress of their grievances was fought without the support of a political party, thus the conflict lost its overt impetus. Radical Anglicans gradually edged into Liberalism and, no longer needing support for their currency formula, abandoned the Dissenters' cause to Dissenters. The militancy of the Nonconformists was then channelled into organizations like the Voluntary Church Society and Anti State Church Association from which they continued their political agitation, though energy

expounded in the provinces, lacked vital support in Parliament. From 1834 onwards Tories in Birmingham had the Loyal and Constitutional Association to back them; but this was a political party and involved in church affairs only by implication. This was merely a matter of protocol; individuals in L and CA were active in church affairs, without flaunting their political banner. The committee members from the numerous church societies in the town, composed the Committee of the L and CA whose Chairman was also Chairman of the 'Ten Churches Fund'.

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Union, Clause 11, dated 20th December 1831.  
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1847, which gives 910 pupils from Anglican and  
Wesleyan Methodist families and 214 from  
Dissenting (including 107 Congregationists  
and 72 Baptists.)
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- 35 In 1841 Dissenters had accommodation for 8,681 pupils in  
their Sunday Schools; Anglicans and Wesleyans  
11,282 in theirs and Roman Catholics 370  
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### 3 THE ATTACK ON LOCAL PRIVILEGED POSITIONS.

In 1830 Birmingham's local administration retained many medieval characteristics. The conglomerate of functions responsible for executing its law, repairing its street, governing its schools and hospitals were of archaic heritage. They were oligarchical, exclusive and privileged. The objectives of reforming forces were to create a representative elective administration, accountable to the electorate for its actions. They felt no 'town in England' stood 'more in need of a Municipal Government'. Radical enthusiasm ran high after the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act in 1835. But, the demand for incorporation was not shared by the elites already exercising power over local affairs, and concurrent with the battle over church rates was another for transforming local government. Generally, activists were divided along the same lines as in previous conflicts: those supporting the campaign for parliamentary reform opposing church rates and contesting the right to have a municipal corporation were challenged by those who wished to retain the privileged order and were adverse to the introduction of reform of church or state.

Power and authority in the town was distributed amongst several elitist bodies: magistrates appointed by the Earl of Warwick, Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, executed its law; a Court Leet of the Lord of the Manor appointed Bailiffs to administer the functional running of the town whilst a self-elected body of Street Commissioners were responsible for lighting, paving and sewerage. Until Municipal Incorporation in 1838, the only office open to election was that of Guardians of the Poor.

Prior to Parliamentary Reform, the Earl of Warwick's choice of magistrates was confined to a predominantly Anglican and Tory elite. Afterwards, his selection exhibited at least a degree of impartiality. Radicals and Nonconformists were given a foothold in 1833 when thirteen new magistrates were appointed, they included Attwood and Scholefield and four Nonconformists, all Unitarians. 'Proof so far as it goes that times are changed and changing' commented the Birmingham



Journal from when 'what are improperly called orthodox religious opinions' were 'the sole test and qualification'.<sup>1</sup> In 1837 a further ten magistrates were recommended: seven Tories, all Anglicans, with three Radicals all Nonconformists, including the Quakers, R.T.Cadbury and Joseph Sturge. Not everyone offered the position accepted. Cadbury became an ardent magistrate; but there is no evidence that Sturge served in the position. Conditional to acceptance was the obligatory oath 'not to injure or weaken the Protestant Church...or to disturb the said Church or the Bishops and Clergy'. Actuated by strong devotion to principles, conscious forbade Sturge paying church rates and signing a similar oath when made a Town Councillor; it was doubtless the reason this time.

Lacking corporate jurisdiction, governing officers such as High Bailiff, Low Bailiff, Constables, Headborough, et cetera, were chosen annually by the Court Leet. Its feudalistic character described by a contemporary source as 'excepting the constables and their assistants, the Headbouroughs, are mere deputies or servants of the Lords' to watch over the preservation of his manorial rights'.<sup>2</sup> It was customary to choose the High Bailiff from the Churchmen and the Low Bailiff from the Dissenters. Table 3.1. shows that politically the majority of the Court Leet were Radicals, and in religious belief Dissenters outnumbered Anglicans, with Unitarians particularly prominent. All Dissenters were Radicals; there were four Anglican Radicals in 1835 with six Anglican Tories and five Anglican Radicals in 1839 with four Anglican Tories. Although the number of activists involved in the Court Leet was small, it shows a higher proportion of Radical Anglicans than in other institutions examined in this section, as well as being higher than the Anglican voting ratio for Radical candidates in the Parliamentary elections of 1837 and 1841. (Section 4.5.) After 1839 most of its activities were absorbed by the newly formed Corporation; nevertheless, it continued functioning responsibilities. albeit with diminishing

TABLE 3.1. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF THE COURT LEET

<u>Political</u>	Tories	Radicals	Total
1835	6	16	22
1839	4	18	22

<u>Religion</u>	Anglican	Unitarians	Congregationalist	Unknown Dissenter	Total
1835	10	8	1	3	22
1839	9	9	1	3	22

The Street Commissioners were granted responsibility for the essential functions of lighting, paving and sewerage in the town by an Act of George III in 1769 and four other Acts subsequently. The insularity of this power elite was dictated by its statutes; vacancies were filled by co-option. Eligibility was restricted by a high property qualification of £1,000 together with a contribution to the poor rate of at least £15 per annum. Despite the obvious social prestige of becoming a Street Commissioner, many eligible householders were reluctant to serve, and those willing often failed to attend the requisite number of meetings, which meant considerable replacing of members. However, many of those failing by default, were co-opted in again later; consequently activities were executed by a fluctuating membership, albeit restricted in choice. The Commissioners were constantly criticised. They bore much of the brunt of Radical demands for Municipal Government. They were accused of 'working in the dark unseen by the public eye, irresponsible to the public voice, appointing their own officers, levying taxes at their pleasure and distributing them, without check or control'.<sup>3</sup> Such unjust attacks, had no foundation in facts, since evidence shows The Street Commissioners clearly lacking in self-interest, fertile in financial expedients and very industrious. However deservedly the Street Commission was able to deflect public criticism and retain its self-elective character until its demise in 1851...it was able to smother protest movements by co-opting potential opponents...and ultimately it was the Commission's record of growing environmental activity which was its best defence'.<sup>4</sup> According to Conrad Gill the Commissioners' effectiveness was much influenced by the

personality of the Chairman: 'a lethargic Chairman often had listless colleagues'.<sup>5</sup> This fact could account for the high activity between 1830 - 1850. Paul Moon James was Chairman until 1836, followed by R.T.Cadbury who remained in the office until 1851. Table 3.2 shows that the majority of Street Commissioners were Anglicans and Tories. Though it is unlikely that there was any explicit religious exclusion or political implications in making appointments, criteria for membership was essentially wealth and time to fulfil the commission's obligations. Hitherto historians have regarded the Commissioners as Whigs,<sup>6</sup> but assessed on the basis of voting in the 1837 and 1841 Parliamentary elections this seems an arguable conclusion.

TABLE 3.2. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF THE STREET COMMISSIONERS.

<u>Political</u>	Tories	Radical	X.Voter.	Unknown Party	Total
1835	31	13		6	50
1839	33	11	1	5	50
1847	39	7	1	5	52

<u>Religion</u>	A	U	Q	W	C	U/R	U/D	Total
1835	34	6	2	1			7	50
1839	34	6	2	3	1		4	50
1847	37	4	1	2	1	2	5	52

Key:- A Anglican  
 U Unitarian  
 Q Quaker  
 W Wesleyan  
 C Congregationist  
 U/R Unknown Religion  
 U/D Unknown Dissenting Religion

When Municipal Incorporation of Birmingham was granted in November 1838, the procedure of appointing magistrates changed. The function of the Court Leet was gradually superseded, though it continued to exist, but the responsibilities of the Street Commissioners remained for the time being unaffected. For the Radicals Municipal Incorporation was a repeat of the 1832 glory, albeit again short lived. After the Charter was granted, politicians battled over the issue. Whigs were divided among themselves and for an influential and active body of Tories who had vigorously contested the necessity, it was a defeat

accepted reluctantly and slowly. Dissenters emerged as the controlling element in the Town Council forcing Anglicans to accept their dominance.<sup>7</sup> In many ways the Municipal Corporation was a 'more significant event for Dissenters than the passing of the Reform Bill'.<sup>8</sup>

Birmingham had a particularly restrictive municipal electorate: in 1851 it comprised a mere 3 per cent of the population.<sup>9</sup> The first municipal election in December 1838 created much interest and conflict in the town, but this waned considerably in succeeding years and did not re-emerge until the late 1840s. Inevitably before the first poll there were Radical and Whig disagreements, particularly of a high-handed action by a Radical self-elective central committee nominating candidates in St. Peter's ward and over-riding local choice. Three committee-sponsored Radicals were finally rejected for the local Whigs. Despite their opposition to Municipal Incorporation, Tories contested all thirteen wards, but Radicals, or their supporters, won every seat with sometime-Union Council members taking the lion's share, distributing the administrative spoils accordingly. The Tories understandably were piqued, while its leaders were accused of vacillating conduct, inactivity and neglect'. Though it 'did seem strange that a party which claimed to have 1,200 of the largest ratepayers in the town should not gain a single seat'.<sup>10</sup> For this, Tories, with some justification, blamed the new boundary division.

'The Radicals were strongest among the small occupiers in the outer parts of the town; the Conservatives were chiefly found among the larger occupiers in the centre. A central ward, such as was customary in many Boroughs including Leeds, might have returned one or even three opposition candidates. But in Birmingham several wards were drawn in strange funnel-shapes from the centre outwards, thus cutting up the town centre and swamping its voters with those from the remoter parts (See map Section 4.7)... The sympathetic Joseph Parkes, well briefed in the politics of the town, had presumably used his position in the Privy Council Office to good effect.'<sup>11</sup>

The new Corporation in Tory eyes were 'nominees of lick spittles of the Political Union'.<sup>12</sup> thereafter they seized every opportunity of inhibiting its power and authority. According to E.P. Hennock the 'occupational composition of the

new Council mirrored...largely that of the Liberal party of the town, led as it was by a few bankers and substantial merchants and consisting of the bulk of those small manufacturers and tradesmen for which Birmingham was renowned'.<sup>13</sup> Dissenters won twenty-two of the thirty-six seats<sup>14</sup> for Birmingham and Edgbaston - with Unitarians gaining the largest share. Anglicans won eight seats and there were six of unknown religious belief.

Radicals generally looked beyond Attwood's conception of a 'corporation primarily as a device for petitioning parliament',<sup>15</sup> they envisaged Incorporation as a first step in the take-over of complete municipal power. Redfern was hinting at the Street Commissioners when he exhorted Radicals 'never to rest satisfied until every oligarchical system throughout the town was utterly abolished and all its rights, powers and authorities transferred to the Town Council'. At this time there were eleven members of the Birmingham Town Council who were Street Commissioners and a further seventeen commissioners who were among the thirty-two candidates defeated at the first municipal election.<sup>16</sup> However, the emergence of representative local government meant no immediate improvement in the 'Liberalization' process: the Corporation soon found its plans opposed by higher authority. Its first list of magistrates contained many new names, while discarding many of the old; but the Earl of Warwick still retained considerable influence in government, goaded by Birmingham Tories he undoubtedly influenced Lord Russell's judgement on this first list submitted by the Municipal Council. Russell removed three Radicals, substituting three Tories, all three of whom had previously served as magistrates. A further two Tories and three Whigs were added to make the total twenty five. The political and religious balance of the town's magistracy was not now greatly different from that appertaining before Municipal Incorporation.

During 1839 the Corporation's position was undermined by three interconnected developments: firstly, validity of its recently acquired charter was questioned, then as a result of Chartist disturbances in the town, the raising of the town's police force was removed from its jurisdiction. Their fate lay

largely at the mercy of the effete Whig Government, aided by local Tories, who again petitioned the Queen to annul the Town's Municipal Charter. The eruption and handling of the Chartist riots in the town seriously affected decisions on the other two questions. Radicals were now harvesting the fruits of their sowing: Birmingham's provocative reputation was influencing Parliamentary judgement. The Birmingham Journal expressed the thoughts of all disillusioned Radicals: 'Here we have a very large town, with no overgrown manufacturers, no local aristocracy, the inhabitants drilled into a knowledge of their rights...this town more completely subdued to petty authority than perhaps any rural village in England'.<sup>17</sup>

Acceptance of the Corporation as an executive body was slow; confirmation of its right to levy a rate came in 1842 as a result of churchwardens and overseers seeking advice on its legality and in the same year, its police functions were restored. The Municipal Council attempted the execution of local reforms, ideas that had germinated during the hey-days of the BPU. Having in mind the Anglican elite governing the Free Grammar School, the Council proposed appointing five additional governors, and an annual Borough audit of school accounts. Controversy flared, school governors against Town Council, dubbed by Tories as a battle 'between two sects of religionists...High Churchmen and Unitarians'.<sup>18</sup> It was a conflict of religious animosity rather than educational equality - the school possessed immense resources, mainly by owning land, that had greatly increased in value with the development of the town. The predominant reason for the Nonconformists' attempted legislation was the Governors giving to Anglicans school land for building Anglican churches. The matter was dropped when the House of Commons rejected the Town Council's proposals, though the question of the Grammar School consistently nagged the Council and was one that they frequently debated. By 1850 Anglican Governors were still in control when Joseph Allday, now a Town Councillor, attacked the system of 'the accounts of the school...audited by the bailiffs of the trust' and declared 'that the public had no further control over them'. As churchwarden, Allday insisted,

he 'had a perfect right to enter the school and inquire into the mode of education...but could not maintain it against a powerful, rich and self elected body of Governors'.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the legality of the Corporation as a rate levying body, there was little interest in Municipal Elections. In some wards only one or two burgesses took the trouble to vote. In the Parish of Birmingham only 321 voted in 1842 and 312 in 1843, less than 10 per cent of those entitled. Despite the apathy of voters the Council gradually increased its pressures to incorporate all municipal functions into the corporation; a prime target was the Street Commission and a serious attempt was made in 1843 to take over its responsibilities. Commissioners were divided on the issue. Many would have used the opportunity afforded by the confirmation of the town's charter to transfer voluntarily to the Town Council the powers which would ultimately be transferred by force.<sup>20</sup> Others could discover on the part of the Council nothing but a more anxiety to lay hold of political power for party purposes.<sup>21</sup> Jaffray, who had replaced R.K. Douglas as editor of the Birmingham Journal, made determined efforts in his paper for amalgamation of powers: the 'time is now arrived when the multifarious powers of the different public bodies of the Borough should be carefully and impartially amalgamated and should be vested in one general body'.<sup>22</sup> In 1845 Street Commissioners gave the Corporation strong reasons for its efforts by preparing a bill for the extension of its own powers. However, Tories seeing the growing importance of the Town Council were also taking interest. The L & CA in the forefront pointed out that the 'discharge of the important duties imposed on the Town Council and the disposition and control of the very large funds now being raised by rates on the inhabitants of the town require that the Conservative party should no longer keep themselves aloof'.<sup>23</sup> Birmingham was still governed by nine different bodies, all taxing the people, but only two of which were elective. There was concern for the larger expenditure necessary to keep pace with the requirements of an expanding town. As we have already seen, a powerful group of popular Radicals were elected to the Guardians of the Poor in an attempt to curtail excessive spending. Representational government, it was argued, would

be less extravagant than irresponsible privileged elites. In 1848 a public meeting chaired by Joseph Allday attacked 'the present expensive, anomalous, unjust, oppressive and antiquated system of local government...the enormous amounts annually levied, collected and enforced according to law by numerous public bodies in the Borough'. But not until 1850 was the Corporation informed that the Commissioners were desirous of obtaining an amalgamation of governing local bodies. All parties were now anxious to end the divisions and govern the town upon the representative principle. The Street Commissioners duties and powers were finally transferred under the 1851 Improvement Act, which like other transitional action precipitated many problems for the years ahead.<sup>24</sup>

Other assemblages with privileged access formed part of the infra-structure of the town, but unlike those so far examined, were not rate levying and consequently not subject to the pressures of those that did. The Court of Requests was one such body, instituted by 1752 and 1807 Acts of Parliament for easier and speedier recovery of small debts. By these acts twenty-two Commissioners were appointed who qualified for admission by possessing an estate of the annual value of £50 or a personal estate to the value of £1,000. Protestantism and property was here closely linked. Of the twenty-two Commissioners listed in Appendix 5, nineteen were Anglicans and three Nonconformists; sixteen Tories, five Radicals and one cross-voter. Inevitably this was an exclusive elite having no direct connection with any other organization in the town. Anglicans also dominated the Overseers of the Poor, as could be expected when appointments were made by magistrates and Church officials. Not until the mid 1840s when the Town Council assumed some jurisdiction over the choice, were Radicals and the occasional Nonconformist included.

Table 3.3. indicates that appointments to the Governorship of the General Hospital favoured Anglicans and Tories, though the balance was redressed slightly between 1832 and 1845. In 1835 there were accusations that political feelings took preference over professional skill in the appointment of a hospital physician.<sup>25</sup> Though Radicals compensated their defeated



candidate Dr. Birt Davies, by making him Town Coroner after Municipal Incorporation. Anglican clergy were often appointed to a governorship, but never a Nonconformist, and patients presumably were forced to accept an Anglican chaplain.

TABLE 3.3. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNORSHIP OF THE GENERAL HOSPITAL

<u>Political</u>	Tories	Radical	Unknown Party	Total
1832	11	3		14
1839	9	4	2	15
1845	11	3	2	16

<u>Religion</u>	Anglicans	Unitarians	Quakers	Unknown Religion	Total
1832	12	1		1	14
1839	12	2	1		15
1847	12	2	2		16

The entrenched dominance of one political party and one religious belief in certain institutions possibly resulted from the period of time in which particular institutes had been established; in the management of the Birmingham Savings Bank, founded in 1827 political or religious bias is not evident. The Bank was for the benefit of the industrial classes and for making safe provision in case of sickness and old age. It became a highly prosperous venture and the number of Trustees enlarged with it; trustworthiness and social standing in the community were obvious determinants for the position of trustee. Table 3.4 demonstrated the religious belief and political persuasion of the Trustees at three points in the period.

TABLE 3.4. POLITICS AND RELIGION OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE BIRMINGHAM SAVINGS BANK

<u>Political</u>	Tories	Radical	Unknown Party	Total
1835	5	8		13
1839	6	6	1	13
1848	43	35		78

<u>Religion</u>	A	U	Q	C	U/R	U/D	Total
1835	7	4	1		1		13
1839	9	2	1		1		13
1848	56	8	6	2	4	2	78

Key:- A Anglican  
 U Unitarian  
 Q Quaker  
 C Congregationist  
 U/R Unknown Region  
 U/D Unknown Dissenting Religion.

Table 3.5. shows that there was no particular bias of religion or politics in the Guardians of the Wrought Plate who were responsible for the Birmingham Assay Office. Its purpose was essentially economic. The intrinsic merit of the Town's gold and silver plate depended on the reliability of the local assay mark imparted by the Guardians. Obviously, choice lay in men of stature, often goldsmiths, silversmiths or brassfounders - Matthew Boulton and James Watt were sometime Guardians - with several peers from adjoining counties such as The Earl of Warwick and Lord Dudley. E.P.Hennock who has examined the Guardians in relationship with the Town Council found a 'relatively small overlap' although 'the overlap with the Street Commissioners was considerable'.<sup>26</sup> This will be examined in a wider context later.

TABLE 3.5. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF THE ASSAY GUARDIANS

<u>Political</u>	Tories	Radical	Cross Voter	Unknown Party	Out of Town Peers	Total
1830	9	11	1	15	3	39
1835	12	11	1	11	4	39
1840	15	12	1	6	4	38
1845	19	11	1	7	4	42
1850	18	9	1	4	4	36

<u>Religion</u>	A	U	C	Unknown Religion	Unknown Dissenter	Out of Town Peers	Total
1830	11	10		15		3	39
1835	14	10		10	1	4	39
1840	17	11		5	1	4	38
1845	21	9	1	6	1	4	42
1850	20	6	1	4	1	4	36

In this essay five privileged positions have been examined in detail, together with Magistrates, the Grammar School and Court of Requests. Names addresses, trade and religion of those holding three or more of these eight positions between 1830 and 1850 are given in Appendix 5, together with voting particulars of the 1837 and 1841 Parliamentary elections. Table 3.6 shows the collated political allegiance and religious

beliefs of these fifty-seven activists. At the first Municipal Election in December 1838 seven of these fifty-seven were elected to the Town Council and two subsequently. Of the seven first elected, one became Mayor immediately and three - all Unitarians - were appointed Aldermen. In the twelve years of the Municipal Corporation's existence i.e. 1839 @ 1850, five of the fifty-seven held the office of Mayor - two Anglicans, two Unitarians, one Congregationist; eleven - all Anglicans served a term of one year as High Bailiff; and four - all Dissenters - as Low Bailiff, sometime during the twenty-one years of the period. In addition twenty-five of the forty-seven were elected as Guardian of the Poor for at least three years, six served for nine years and one twelve years during the twenty-one year period.

TABLE 3.6. POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF MAIN ACTIVISTS

<u>Political</u>	Tory	Radical	Cross Voter	Unknown Party	Total
3 or more	33	20	1	3	57
4 or more	14	12	1	2	29
5 or more	8	6	1	1	16
6 or more	2	2	1	1	6

<u>Religion</u>	A	U	C	Q	RC	U/D	Total
3 or more	41	10	2	2	1	1	57
4 or more	20	7	1	1			29
5 or more	10	5	1				16
6 or more	3	2	1				6

Key:- A Anglican  
 U Unitarian  
 C Congregationist  
 Q Quaker  
 RC Roman Catholic  
 U/D Unknown Dissenting Religion.

Fortunately it has been possible to identify the religious belief for most of the activists involved in this section thus enabling the exclusive nature of privileged power in Birmingham to be amply demonstrated. Other than the Court Leet, Anglicans and Tories were in the majority, but not to a marked extent. The only position from which Dissenters were purposely excluded was that of Governor of the Free Grammar School, and this was only an arbitrary barrier. An attempt to make it statutory failed. Otherwise position holders, though often self-elected

and self-delegated, were those with sufficient time to spare for fulfilling these duties and the requisite wealth and social standing to be considered in the first place. Anglicans and Tories were in the majority because there were more of them available with these attributes. As indicated later in this essay (Section 4.5.) Dissenters predominated among the 'manufacturers' and it is highly probable that they had less time at their disposal to execute ex-curricular activities, whilst the majority of the professional class were Anglicans able to leave their offices without detriment to business. They were also a class that naturally gravitated to positions like those we have examined, which needed their type of skills.

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- 7 See letter from J.P.Lee, Head Master of King Edward VI's  
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26 April 1847 on a matter of education.
- 8 Tudor Jones (1962) p.204
- 9 Hennock (1973) p.12
- 10 Fraser (1979) p.87
- 11 Fraser (1979) p.87
- 12 Birmingham Advertiser 3 January 1839
- 13 See Hennock (1973) p.23 and p.25.
- 14 The complete Council was eventually fifty two seats, this  
was after the choice of Aldermen had been made  
and a by-election had taken place to fill consequent  
vacancies.
- 15 Hennock (1973) p.18
- 16 Hennock (1973) p.25 for full details.
- 17 Birmingham Journal 7 September 1839
- 18 Birmingham Journal 6 August 1842
- 19 Aris's Birmingham Gazette 14 October 1850
- 20 See Bunce (1878) p.296
- 21 See Aris's Birmingham Gazette 1 April 1844, Speech by  
J.H.Beilby
- 22 Birmingham Journal 17 May 1845
- 23 Aris's Birmingham Gazette 21 December 1846
- 24 See E.P. Hennock (1973) p.31
- 25 Appointment to replace J.K.Booth who was also a Street  
Commissioner and Governor of the Free Grammar School.  
According to Birmingham Journal 19 September 1835  
'altogether a party and political question...when  
we find a dignitary of the Established Church  
avowing that professional merit has little to do  
with the appointment of a physician to a General  
Hospital that party spirit with him prevails over  
public duty.
- 26 Hennock (1973) p. 26

#### 4 DIMENSIONS OF PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

##### 4.1. Elections 1832 - 1841.

Between 1832 and 1841 there were four Parliamentary Elections in Birmingham: with the exception of 1837 all results followed the national trend of a continuing decline in support for Whig/Radical candidates. In 1841, when the Tories gained power in Parliament, Radicals retained both seats in Birmingham albeit by a tenuous margin.

Whether affinity between local election results and those nationwide determine national politics as a variable in voting behaviour is a relevant point for this essay. John Vincent considers that 'for most people politics was the politics of the town in which they lived their lives'<sup>1</sup> and few historians would disagree with this. Nevertheless, the effect of national politics cannot be ignored, since local politics were often an interpretation of a national question. The Corn Law issue was a case in point. In Birmingham there was no clear split for or against repeal: the question was too complicated. Many local industrialists supported the tenets of the currency formula and both sides of the political divide allocated this priority, maintaining that agitation for Corn Law repeal should not be treated as a separate issue. None of the four Birmingham elections of this period were fought on a single issue, not even 1841. It may well be the influence of what Nossiter describes as 'long term lines of social cleavage' or the importance of one's religious belief that were the predominant determinants of voting preference for the majority of electors.

In 1832 two Birmingham Radicals triumphantly entered Parliament unopposed, and the first contested Parliamentary election was held in the town in 1835. In the intervening period there was a fall of nearly 15 per cent in registered voters. The entirely middle-class electorate, remained indifferent to current national issues or recent Poor Law and Factory Legislation, which were controversial matters in other Boroughs where there was a large working-class membership. If there was a dominant issue, it had to be church rates which actuated men on both sides. Without figures of a contested

Borough election support for contending parties was a tantalizing conjecture for local political pundits. Emotional fervour ran high. In a church rate poll a few weeks earlier, the Church party polled 1,367 votes in favour of a rate while 5,922 Radicals or near Radicals opposed it. By excluding females, those voting twice and those not paying borough rates estimators had the first positive indication of local party support. This carried important implications for a contingent parliamentary election, a point not lost on the Birmingham Journal which estimated a thousand likely Tory voters and questioned 'what chance (do) the Tories have of returning members...out of a constituency of nearly five thousand?' <sup>2</sup>

Tories resolutely ignored all such despondent forecasts, and nominated Richard Spooner as their parliamentary candidate emerging with an institutionalised Loyal and Constitutional Association at the same time, which publicly declared its 'firm determination zealously to support the Protestant Church Establishment', <sup>3</sup> Without a Protestant Association this society composed exclusively of staunch Church of England supporters served the double purpose of Tory politics and Anglican authority in Birmingham and North Warwickshire. Spooner was a former Radical despite his now declared objective of maintaining 'the Established religion' according to the L & CA 'judging from his past conduct (he was) a man of Liberal opinion', <sup>4</sup> , who by his nomination hoped to poach sufficient Whigs to undermine Radical support. Whigs at this juncture were an unknown electoral factor and the Radicals were also compelled to make overtures to them. In the absence of BPU, former members organised a public meeting composed of 'High Whigs to Ultra Radicals' delicately manoeuvring to heal scars of disunity caused by an earlier Whig-Dissenter meeting convened, it was alleged, to unseat Attwood. <sup>5</sup> Unanimity was restored, and they expressed their determination to 'waive every difference of opinion' and 'join together as one man to drive from his Majesty's Council, the Duke of Wellington and that corrupt and accursed faction of which he is the acknowledged leader'. <sup>6</sup>

'The fight was on' declared Attwood and Spooner 'seduced by a knot of Tories' would 'quickly discover that his High-

Church notions and Tory politics are out of date, and that however prevalent they may be at Oxford and Cambridge they are not suited to the meridian of Birmingham'. Maintaining in, reference to the Church and King riots, that 'they are just forty-three years too late'.<sup>7</sup>

The manner in which religion determined party and the divided nature of the town's electorate soon became evident. After reading Peel's Tamworth Manifesto, Dissenting ministers passed a resolution presuming 'No Dissenter nor any friend of civil and religious liberty will give his vote for Mr Richard Spooner'.<sup>8</sup> Local Wesleyans joined the older Nonconformist sects in open hostility to Wellington, 'the chosen champion of High Church prerogative men of Offord,' who had declared 'never to redress the grievances of Dissenters'. Enfranchised Dissenters regarded their vote as a sacred trust to be used for the benefit of their church, these combined with Anglican indifference to High Church ideology, ensured a Radical victory. The result was overwhelming:-

#### 1835 Election

	<u>Votes</u>
Attwood.....	1,718
Scholefield.....	1,660
Spooner.....	915

The Tory policy of flattering the Whigs had proved a dismal failure. After the election the L & CA chairman quickly condemned those 'of the Whig Party to whose conduct this result is due' stating that 'nothing need be said, that party has ceased to exist'.<sup>9</sup>

After the 1835 Parliamentary election tension between the two parties grew and party lines hitherto vaguely etched became indelibly engraved. The importance of Registration had now been realized and each year party newspapers cajoled the entitled to register. By the next election in June 1837 political associations had developed their own individual characteristics, with townsmen referring to two unions in Birmingham, the 'Orange' and the 'Political'. Tories were strongly established with their 'Loyal and Constitutional Association', whilst Radicalism was expressed in a Reform Association and eventually



in a reconstituted Political Union to which most Whigs without an organisation of their own non-committally aligned themselves. These organised factions continually faced each other across political or religious dividing-lines, ever watchful for flimsy excuses to provoke conflict. In electoral strength Radicals at this time, even without Whig support, were superior. The Tories' only chance of success lay in that strength not being sufficiently exerted.<sup>10</sup>

Revival of the BPU had been contemplated in 1835 to support the Municipal Corporation Bill but the idea was abandoned when the Bill became law. Meanwhile the Radical Reform Association met weekly in a Unitarian school-room. The Union assembled occasionally when important national issues arose, endowed with grandiose ideas that opposition would crumble before its forbidding image. However, it was now a paper-tiger; the memory of its compelling past was ineffectual and in 1836 over one thousand Tories signed a protest against the Union's unwarrantable assumption of power in holding a town meeting. In the deteriorating economic climate, workers became increasingly militant and the Union finally reformed in April 1837. By the following June it had over eight thousand members, though this was not an electoral asset since few were eligible to vote. When Tories gathered signatures again and despatched them to Parliament in protest at this reorientation, Radicals furiously attacked the L & CA chairman, James Taylor, for his 'double conversion from Sectarianism to High Churchism as well as from Reform to High Toryism'.<sup>11</sup> More effective however than the attack on personalities was the Union's published list of traders who had signed this protest against its revival, a document held responsible by the outrages Tories, with some justification, for the intimidation of publicans and shopkeepers that occurred during the 1837 election.

Radical candidature before this election was again controversial. Strong pressure arose for a Dissenter to represent the town following rumours of a recommendation from the central committee desirous of seeing the Dissenting minority in the House of Commons strengthened. Local Dissenters chose the Quaker Joseph Sturge to represent them; but an

hostile and powerful Reform Association thought otherwise, seeing 'various reasons...which render Mr Sturge unfit to represent the Borough'.<sup>12</sup> Attwood stood again, despite maintaining that his disposition to resign was stronger than ever and Scholefield stood with him. Tories chose Hon.A.G. Stapleton a former private secretary to George Canning who though an ardent campaigner, sealed his electoral fate at the adoption meeting by admitting that he would not support abolition of church rates or allow Dissenters into the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.<sup>13</sup>

The result increased the Radicals 1835 majority.

### 1837 Election

	<u>Votes</u>		
	Attwood	Scholefield	Stapleton
Attwood	29		
Attwood/Scholefield	2,028	2,028	
Attwood/Stapleton	88		88
Scholefield		44	
Scholefield/Stapleton		42	42
Stapleton			916
Total	<u>2,145</u>	<u>2,114</u>	<u>1,046</u>

Compared with 1835 Attwood's personal vote rose by 24.8 per cent; Scholefield's by 27.3 per cent; and Stapleton's over Spooner's 1835 votes by 11 per cent; straight party votes totalled three thousand and seventeen, 95.5 per cent of those voting, with a mere 4.5 per cent voting across party lines. The reduced Tory share was contrary to the national trend and attributable to the fact that Stapleton was a candidate without local connections a 'former Commissioner of Customs for two years' a 'pensioner for life' and not 'a proper member for the greatest manufacturing community in Europe'.<sup>14</sup> This election was characterised by lack of provocative issues and confined mainly to exaggerated abuse of candidates particularly against Stapleton. It exhibited many features expected of an early Victorian contest, like allegations of bribery, intimidation, and even a 'riot'. Attwood accused Stapleton of treating at public houses and spending £3,000 supposedly from the Carlton Club. There were also reports of intimidation of some shopkeepers and publicans, while at least two polling booths suffered obstruction.

Such coercion deprived Stapleton of a few votes, but not enough to affect the outcome. A disturbance which started outside the Tory headquarters after the Poll had closed, was classed as 'a riot' by local newspapers, but was little more than excessive election enthusiasm by the lower classes. There was no evidence of a religious motive. Certainly the disturbance was not on the scale of the 'Church and King' riots which erupted at the same hotel forty-five years earlier, although local newspapers made continual comparisons. Elections were occasions of excitement and free entertainment for the unenfranchised, a variation on their mundane existence. This was the only election in Birmingham which developed into violence of an intensity that necessitated calling on the military to restore order. Army intervention was normal practice in this period though a method constantly criticised. It had occurred recently in the adjacent North Warwickshire constituency which particularly incensed leading Birmingham Radicals, but lacking an adequate police force there was little alternative for authorities responsible for keeping public order. On this occasion criticism came from local Tories who took exception to the commanding officer's handling of the outbreak in the town. Otherwise during 1832-1850 election commotions were merely excessive intimidation by non-electors; reports of a policeman's ear 'being nearly torn off and 'large mobs attacking Tory voters'<sup>15</sup> savoured of journalistic exaggeration. Frequent reports of the obstruction of polling-booths were hazards expected to be negotiated by a voter; it had a minimal effect upon polling figures despite accusations to the contrary by defeated candidates.

After nine years of Radical ascendancy there now began a turn-round in party fortunes. The Tories rapidly recovered from the 1837 election defeat and achieved a vastly improved result in an 1840 by-election; though weakness and fissures that had developed in the Radical ranks were mainly responsible, rather than the efforts made by the Tories themselves. The year 1839 witnessed the trough of an economic depression and the emergence of Chartism and Anti Corn Law agitation. By December, when Attwood resigned his Parliamentary seat, Radical morale was at a low ebb. Dissentions and discords in its ranks

caused by the Whig Government's treatment of the newly formed Corporation and the break-up of the BPU following Chartist disagreements had made its mark. Disenchantment at this point was expressive of an age and a town for which a reformed parliament had provided nothing. Efforts were made to rejuvenate popular Radicalism, but its leaders realised that concessions had to be made to the varying shades of public opinion. The exhortations of the Birmingham Journal's editor were typical: 'the stream of political freedom could no more run backwards than any other streams' and having 'lost some ground they should not tacitly give up the remainder... Union is power still... since we cannot get all shades and descriptions of Liberals on our terms, let us take them on their own'.<sup>16</sup> This was a far cry from 1832 when Attwood rebuffed Whigs after they had timidly suggested pledges from him on voting in the Commons.

With no Tory campaigning in the by-election, the contest between the two Radicals G.F. Muntz and Joseph Sturge had all the characteristics of a two party contest. The political cleavage also divided Nonconformist support. In the absence of established party backing, it is difficult to assess these candidates' political allegiance. Sturge was an altruist and a dyed-in-the-wool Radical: Muntz an antagonistic Whig. Most of the manufacturers supported Muntz because of his alignment with the currency formulists, so did the wealthy Whigs. Sturge's followers were formed from personal friends and the vast numbers of non-electors. This was a partition reflected in the division of religious beliefs: Baptists and Quakers allied with Sturge; the Unitarians, Congregationists and most of the Radical Anglicans backed Muntz. Tories were delighted with dissension in opponents ranks: 'it is amusing to see those dear friends the Radicals cutting one another up so handsomely' wrote the Birmingham Advertiser describing the struggle as a

'trial of strength between the remains of the Old Whig and Court Leet party of the town, included under the generic appellation of Whig - Radical on the one hand, and on the other the more open Radicals combined with many of the Baptists and (alas) some other orthodox Dissenters'.<sup>17</sup>

Despite disruption within Radical ranks there was no organisation powerful enough on this occasion to force Sturge's withdrawal and create a united front. Sturge's committee suggested a town-meeting to settle the issue: this Muntz flatly refused, considering it unnecessary since the question would be decided on nomination day. There was the usual placating of the important drink trade and the BTS were forced to appease retail brewers by issuing a denial that Sturge had been involved in their deputation to local magistrates for curtailment of licensing hours. Muntz issued a statement pointing out that while 'still adhering to the principles of the Church of England I have the most decided objection to the connexion between Church and State, which has been the Church almost entirely a political society'.<sup>18</sup> R.K. Douglas continued his opposition to the Anti Corn Law agitation by supporting Muntz, describing him as 'the superior candidate' and Sturge 'not a proper man to legislate for the great community'.<sup>19</sup> Other than this evaluations were deliberately tongue-in-cheek. Radicals were not looking to widen the gap in already demoralised ranks.

At nomination a show of hands favoured Muntz. Sturge then withdrew, Sir Charles Wetherall was nominated by the Tories. The result of the Poll was:-

#### 1840 Election

	<u>Votes</u>
Muntz.....	1,454
Wetherall.....	915

(Source: J.A. Langford. Birmingham Political Elections 1832 -1880)  
A very low poll, with approximately half of those registered abstaining,<sup>20</sup> particularly Radicals who protested by apathy rather than adopting the alternative of supporting a Tory. Tories were jubilant with their achievement by a candidate 'not known, not present...started without notice'.<sup>21</sup> Wetherall's connexion with the Bristol riots in 1831 was conveniently overlooked and Tories concentrated instead on his opposition as Attorney General to the Roman Catholic Relief Bill in its progress through the Commons.

By the next Parliamentary election in July 1841 a change of allegiance among some of the town's politicians was plainly

evident. Indeed it was apparent in 1840. Reform as a doctrinal, political term was dropped and many Radicals felt it expedient to refer to themselves as Liberals. In this new phase there was considerable shifting of ideological positions on the Corn Law question: some formerly opposed like T.C.Salt and R.K.Douglas now ardently supported repeal. Free trade became one of the issues, though despite the secular nature of the town there was no attempt to prove Corn laws 'anti-scriptural and anti-religious, opposed to the law of God' as happened elsewhere in the country'.<sup>22</sup> Muntz and Scholefield were the Radical candidates, though never referring to themselves as such. Richard Spooner stood for the Tories. The militant wing of the Chartists nominated Northern Star reporter G.White, but Joseph Sturge declined the Christian Chartists invitation to stand. Each candidate had his own political formula, making the attachment of a party label paradoxical, particularly in the case of the Radicals. Scholefield was a strong advocate of free-trade. But Muntz was adamant that Corn Laws should not be separated from the currency question. Though Spooner's ideas on religion were somewhat esoteric, he held similar views to other candidates on currency and corn laws, frequently repeating them during the election campaign. Spooner's 'boastful advocacy of the Glorious Constitution in Church and State' and his declaration of High Church principles brought strong reactions from Nonconformists who demanded 'Religious Liberty' and 'Spiritual Freedom'. For the first time the Non-Electors' Committee pleaded with Dissenting electors not to abandon their fellows or their principles 'by supporting the man who insults you'.<sup>23</sup> Muntz thought it prudent to court the Dissenters and was presented at the nomination as a 'firm and consistent advocate of civil and religious liberty' [and with reference to the Warwick Assizes] ... 'whose sufferings in the cause of religious liberty were well known',<sup>24</sup> After the election R.K.Douglas published a Poll Book of those 'who voted for free trade' and those who voted against free trade and for Richard Spooner', but the issue was never that clear-cut.

Under Peel's leadership the Tories came to power, though less than half of the constituencies in the country were

contested. Birmingham was one of the few large towns to retain both Radical seats, though the margin was close.

1841 Election

	<u>Votes</u>		
	Muntz	Scholefield	Spooner
Muntz	23		
Muntz/Scholefield	1,894	1,894	
Muntz/Spooner	258		258
Scholefield		35	
Scholefield/Spooner		34	34
Spooner			1,533
Total	<u>2,175</u>	<u>1,963</u>	<u>1825</u>

G.White stood down before polling commenced.

Cross-voting was higher than in 1837, particularly leading Radical with Tory, and in consequence straight party votes dropped nearly 6 per cent to 90 per cent compared with 95.5 per cent in 1837.

Percentage increase/decrease of candidate's votes 1837 - 1841

Muntz 1.4 per cent higher than Attwood.  
 Scholefield 7.1. per cent less than Scholefield. (1837)  
 Spooner 74.5. per cent higher than Stapleton.

The Tory non-voters were rebuked for their apathy by the Birmingham Advertiser <sup>25</sup> but its accusation that they might 'have turned the scale when the Quakers came forward at the last push to give them in favour of Mr Scholefield' was not true: one hundred and thirty-eight votes separated Scholefield and Spooner; there were only thirty-five plumpers for Scholefield, though many of these were Quakers.

The extent of interest amongst Birmingham voter's for this election was not great (see below). There was disappointment with Melbourne's Government, Radicalism generally and Reform in particular; Dissenters were especially incensed at the Whig Government's abandonment of their grievances after 1837. There was no one explanation for the drop in overall Radical support. Over and above the effects on local industry of a national recession, the town had acquired moribund municipal status and the Chartist disturbances in the town had alienated many Radical supporters. Disenchantment with the first and fear engendered by the second particularly affected Radicals.

#### 4.2. Electorate of 1841 Parliamentary Election.

Birmingham's electorate was small in relation to its population: this is exemplified when its ratio of voters to population is compared with neighbouring boroughs. Unlike these, Birmingham was not a Parliamentary Borough in its own right before the Reform Act of 1832, therefore there was not a carry-over of enfranchised Freemen to swell the number of its electors.

	1832 Registered Electors	1832 Total Population	Percentage
Birmingham	4,309	146,986	2.9
Coventry	3,289	27,076	12.1
Stafford	1,176	6,956	16.9
Warwick	1,340	9,109	14.7
Worcester	2,366	27,313	8.7

(Source C.R.Dod Electoral Facts 1832 - 1853  
London 1853 )

A number of salient points appertaining to the 1841 Parliamentary Election in Birmingham are illustrated in Table 4.1. pages 60 and 61; 37.5 cent of the eligible voted (Column 11) with a maximum double registering of 13 per cent - 1,153 business premises (Column 5) in addition to 8,930 residential (Column 4 ). Identifiable double registering (see notes below Table 4.1 ) indicate approximately 40 - 42 per cent of the eligible voted, a figure that implies a high level of voter apathy and non-participation. Sources are not available to provide similar details for other Parliamentary Elections in Birmingham during the 1832 - 1850 period, but the percentage of those who voted placed against the number registered for these elections (summarised in Table 4.2 below) does suggest that the 1841 non-participating voter was not an exception.

TABLE 4.2. REGISTERED ELECTORS WHO VOTED IN THE FIVE ELECTIONS  
1832 - 1844

	Voted	Registered	Crude Percentage
1832	-	4,309	-
1835	2,561	3,681	69.7
1837	3,153	5,236	60.2
1840	2,369	4,600 *	51.5
1841	3,777	5,870	64.3
1844	4,176	6,383	65.4

\* Quoted by the Birmingham Journal 25 January 1840



The Registered figures have to be treated with some reservations; an unknown number of double registrations, deaths and removals could overstate the figures shown and energetic recruiting inflate the total in a particular year. The interesting point is that percentages of the registered who voted 1840 apart, did not fluctuate greatly: the mean was 64.9 per cent with a maximum of 69.7 per cent and a minimum of 60.2 per cent. There are indications that the number of voters fluctuated with the increase in those registered, when the registered rose steeply in a short period, for example by 1,555 in two years between 1835 and 1837 the percentage of voters was low (60.2 per cent). When only 634 were added to the register in four years between 1837 and 1841 the percentage who voted was higher at 64.3 per cent; and with an increase of 513 in three years between 1841 - 1844 the percentage rose to 65.4. per cent.

**TABLE 4.1** ELECTORATE STATISTICS FOR BIRMINGHAM PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION 1841

Rating District	Population	Houses Paying Rates	Number of £10 Houses Males	Number of separate Business Premises	Total Eligible
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
EDGBASTON	6,609	1,018	765		765
ASTON	38,098	8,417	1,883	153	2,036
ST PAULS		2,477	719	239	958
LADYWOOD		2,399	650	89	739
ST PETERS		2,943	578	73	651
ST GEORGES		5,342	981	49	1,030
ST MARTINS	138,215	3,612	723	141	864
ST PHILIPS		2,575	678	160	838
ALL SAINTS		2,132	486	44	530
ST MARYS		3,688	774	96	870
ST THOMAS'S		2,864	693	109	802
TOTAL	182,922	37,467	8,930	1,153	10,083

#### Sources

Column 2. 1841 Census

Columns 3,4 and 5. Birmingham Municipal Rate Books, October 1840. BRL

Column 7. Birmingham Borough Register of Electors: List revised by Barristers 1840 - BRL

Column 9. 1841 Election, Birmingham Poll Book. BRL.

Double registrations - registered at both business and residential addresses - would inflate figures in Columns 6 and 7 and affect percentages. Red figures - columns 8, 10, 11 and 12 and those registered at their business address not at their residence and vice versa - would affect Column 6 and the percentages in columns 8, 10 and 11.

Many double registrations were identifiable from sources, e.g. CADBURY JOHN, Calthorpe Street, Registration No.5395 in Edgbaston, House, RV. £34. Voted from 93 Bull Street, Registration No.890 in St Philips, Warehouse, RV. £68.

MATCHETT FREDERICK, Hagley Road, Registration No 5641 in Edgbaston, House, RV. £34. Voted from 45 Charlotte Street, Registration No 2,419 in St.Pauls. Shops/Yard RV, £145.

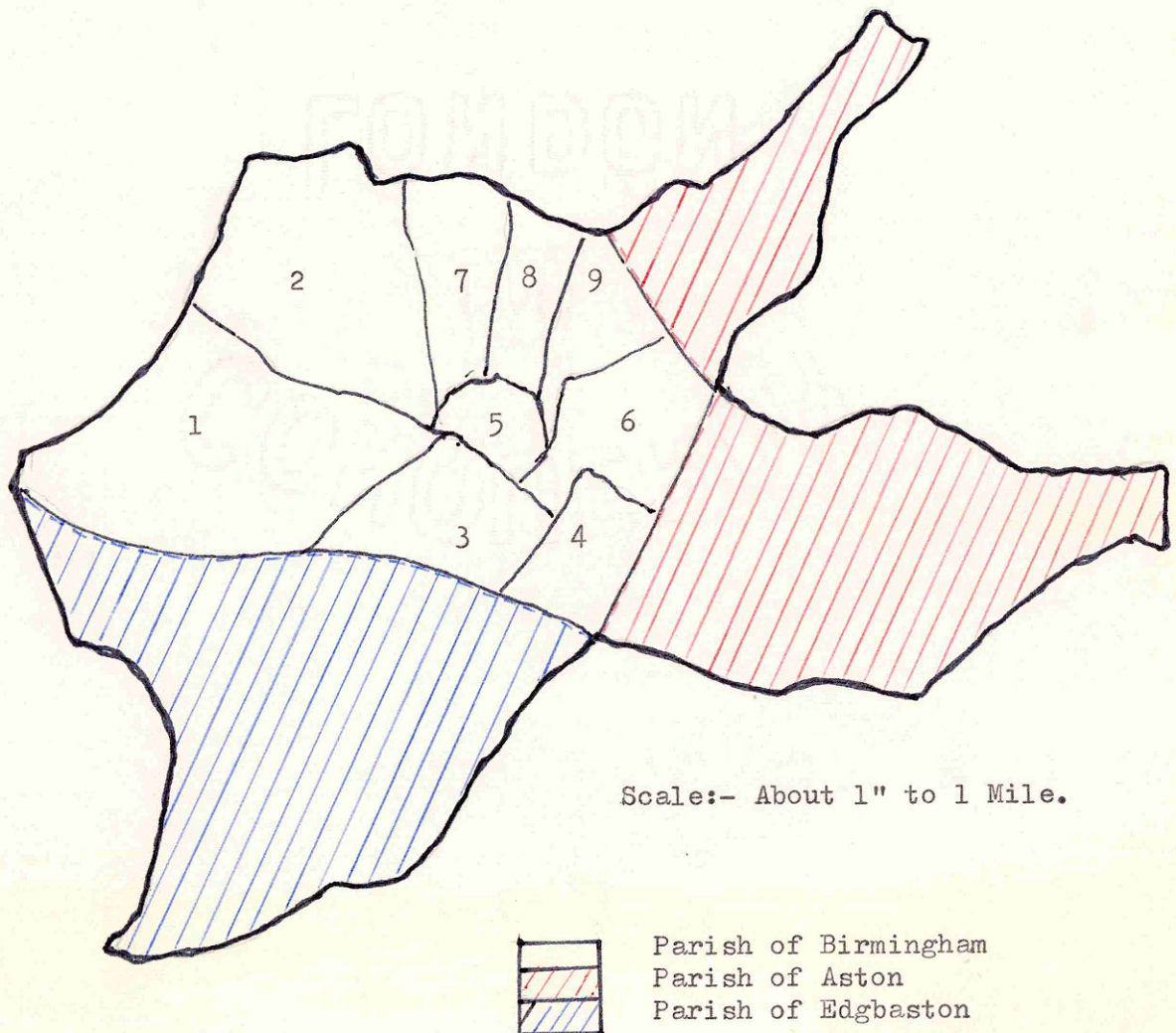
Sources however, do not identify whether ELLIOTT WILLIAM, Hagley Road Registration No 5440 in Edgbaston, House RV £29 who did not vote was the ELLIOTT WILLIAM, who recorded a vote from Frederick Street, Registration No.1145 in All Saints. Warehouse/Shops RV £25; or whether one of the four SMITH BENJAMIN'S voting from various addresses in the town were SMITH BENJAMIN, Bristol Road, Registration No 5741 who did not vote.

Number Registered	Registered as a % of eligible	Number of Voters	Voters as a % of Houses ( 9 of 3 )	Voters as a % of Eligible ( 9 of 6 )	Voters as a % of Registered ( 9 of 7 )
7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
598	78	332	33	43	56
1,025	50	640	9	31	62
623	65	386	16	40	62
336	46	187	8	25	56
442	68	309	10	47	70
370	36	277	5	27	75
461	53	289	8	33	63
620	74	380	15	45	61
314	59	200	9	38	64
592	66	389	11	45	66
489	61	388	14	48	79
5,870	58.2.	3,777	10.1.	37.5.	64.3.

As all double registrations are not identifiable, figures in Table 4.1. are quantified as provided by the particular source, e.g. CADBURY JOHN is included in the 'number registered' Column 7 for Edgbaston and St Philips, though in Column 9 voting in St Philips only.

## RATING DISTRICTS OF BIRMINGHAM

Outline of parishes taken from Drake's map of Birmingham, published by J Drake, 52 New Street, Birmingham in the 1830s. Individual rating districts within Parish of Birmingham have been estimated from streets shown on that map and the 1840 Birmingham Rate Books.



Rating Districts in The Parish of Birmingham.

1. Ladywood
2. All Saints
3. St.Thomas's
4. St,Martins.
5. St.Philips.
6. St.Peters.
7. St.Pauls.
8. St.Georges.
9. St.Marys.

#### 4.3 Erosion of the 1837 Votes and Compilation of 1841

The electoral history of those qualified ratepayers who voted in 1841 is shown in Table 4.3 with relative percentages in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

TABLE 4.3 EROSION OF THE 1837 VOTES AND THE COMPILATION OF 1841

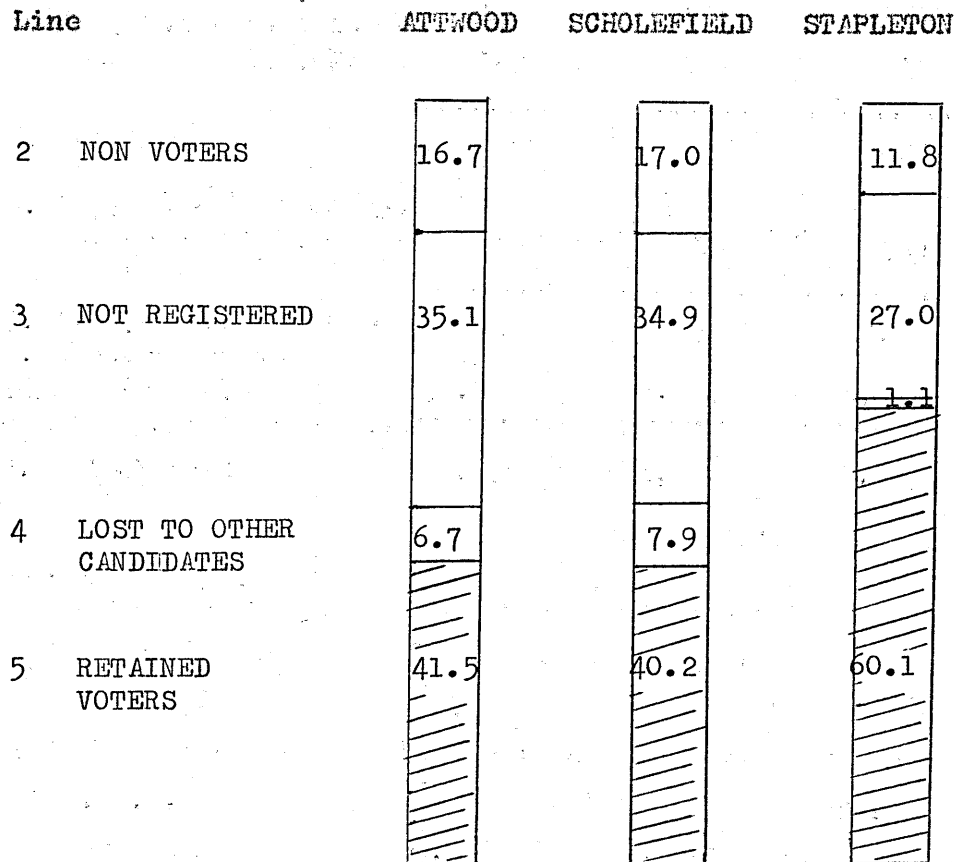
	Attwood	Scholefield	Stapleton
1. 1837 Poll.	2,145	2,114	1,046
2. Registered but did not vote.	359	360	123
3. Not Registered.	754	738	282
4. 1837 Votes lost to other candidates	143	166	12
5. Retained Votes	889	850	629
6. 1837 Votes gained from other candidates	46	16	159
7. 1837 Votes realigned	935	866	788
8. Voters not voting in 1837	1,240	1,097	1,037
9. 1841 Poll	2,175	1,963	1,825
	Muntz	Scholefield	Spooner

Birmingham was a two-member Parliamentary constituency and all enfranchised residents were entitled to two votes. There were three candidates in both the 1837 and 1841 elections providing six possible choices for the elector: he could vote for two candidates, e.g. both Radical or one Radical and one Tory, or plump for a single candidate. Within the context of Muntz replacing Attwood and Spooner replacing Stapleton in 1841, a voter could change support affecting one or two candidate's total vote by plumping for one candidate where previously he had voted for a combination of two, or voting for a combination of candidates when hitherto plumping for one, for example those who plumped for Attwood in 1837 and switched to Muntz and Scholefield in 1841 increased only Scholefield's votes (Line 6) leaving Muntz's votes unaffected (Line 5). Likewise for those voting for the combination of Attwood and Stapleton in 1837 and switching to Spooner in 1841 only Muntz's votes were reduced (Line 4) whilst Spooner's votes remained the same (Line 5).

Lines 4 and 6 do not correspond because where, for example an elector voted for Attwood and Scholefield in 1837 and Spooner in 1841 each of the former lost a vote, but only one vote was gained by Spooner. Conversely to the twelve who plumped for Stapleton in 1837 and switched to Muntz and Scholefield in 1841, the reverse applied.

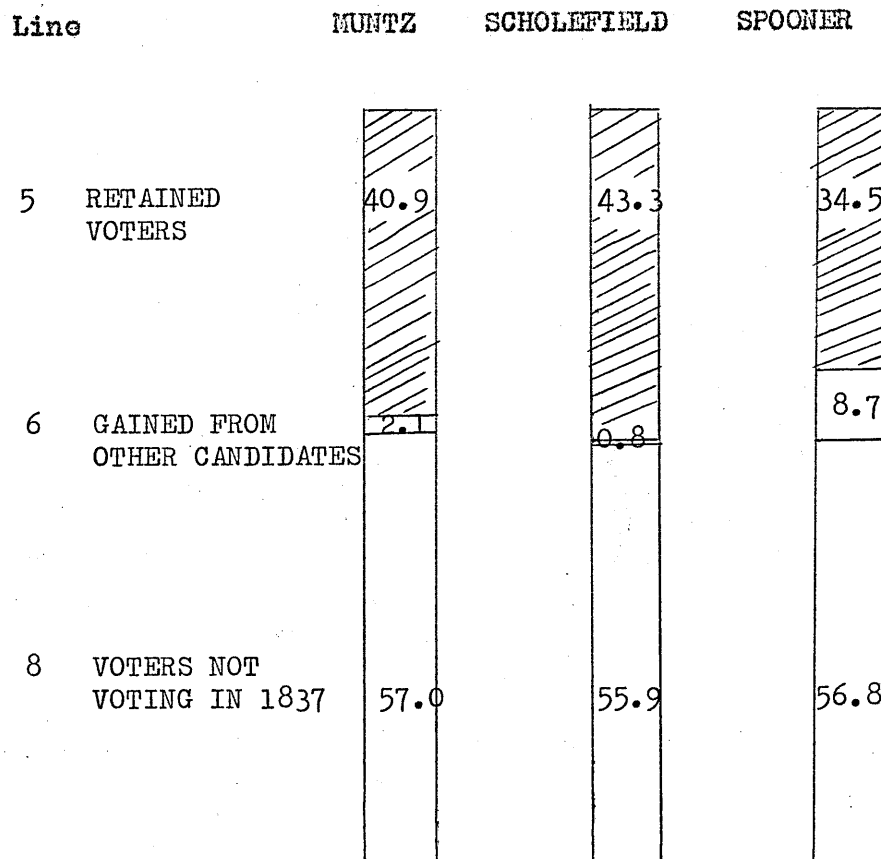
FIGURE 4.1. VOTES LOST/RETAINED, EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE 1837 TOTAL VOTES

( Table 4.3. Lines 1 - 5 )



**FIGURE 4.2. VOTES GAINED AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE 1841  
CANDIDATES VOTE**

(Table 4.3. Lines 5, 6 and 8 )



These various figures indicate that the reason for the greatly reduced Radical lead in 1841 was predominately absence of their 1837 voters. After deducting non-voters, non-registered, votes lost to other candidates and adding votes gained, one hundred and forty seven 1837 votes separated the leading Radical (Muntz) and Tory (Spooner) (Table 4.3. Line 7), compared with one thousand and ninety-nine in the 1837 election (Table 4.3 Line 1) and seventy-eight votes separated Scholefield and Spooner compared with one thousand and sixty-eight in 1837. Comparison of leading Radical to Tory at this immediate stage - before adding new 1841 voters - gives Spooner 45.7 per cent share of the 1837 poll, compared with the 32.8 received by the Tory in 1837 and the 45.5. per cent of the Tory final 1841 election figure.

New voters contributed over half of each of the three candidates 1841 total votes, Muntz's total was consolidated by

recruiting 36.8 per cent of new voters, placing him at the head of the poll; Scholefield retained a parliamentary seat by adding to his marginally higher realigned total (Table 4.3 Line 7) a slightly larger share than Spooner - 32.5 per cent compared to 30.7. per cent. In 1841 Spooner needed an increase of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent in votes to displace Scholefield from second place. In the Poll, Stapleton would have needed 102 per cent in 1837.

Table 4.4 below demonstrates the level of voters repeating their 1837 vote in 1841, with Radical voters particularly lacking in consistency.

TABLE 4.4 PATTERN OF 1837 VOTES REPEATING THEIR VOTE IN 1841  
I.E. FOR THE SAME CANDIDATE OR COMBINATION OF CANDIDATES

1837		1841
Attwood	3.4%	Muntz
Attwood/Scholefield	30.9%	Muntz/Scholefield
Scholefield	13.3%	Scholefield
Attwood/Stapleton	11.4%	Muntz/Spooner
Scholefield/Stapleton	11.4%	Scholefield/Spooner
Stapleton	58.6%	Spooner

These figures differ from Figure 5.1. owing to the variance of voters within the six voting categories.

There was an increase in cross-voting, sometimes referred to as cross-party splits - Voters giving one vote for each party - as can be seen from Table 4.5. below. Significantly there was a rise in the number of voters splitting between the leading Radicals and Tory and a marginal in those of the second Radical and Tory.

TABLE 4.5 CROSS-PARTY SPLIT VOTING

1837		1841	
Attwood/Stapleton	88	Muntz/Spooner	258
Scholefield/Stapleton	42	Scholefield/Spooner	34
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	130		292

Of the 1841 Cross-party split voting:-

190	Did not vote in 1837
61	Voted for Attwood/Scholefield
19	Plumped for Stapleton
22	Cross-voted in 1837



#### 4.4 Socio-Economic Class voting in 1837 and 1841

Against marked features of low-level participation and a large turnover in the electorate, Parliamentary Elections of 1837 and 1841 can now be analysed in terms of socio-economic class.

To overcome problems of bringing twentieth century class preconceptions to this evaluation, a contemporary source has been utilized which stratifies in the following socio-economic order: 'Clergy, Gentry, Bankers, Merchants, Manufacturers, Traders and other Inhabitants of Birmingham',<sup>26</sup> not an highly sophisticated classification, though nevertheless adequate. The order has been categorised as follows for the purpose of analysis:

- 1 Clergy/Gentry/Bankers/Merchants.
- 2 Manufacturers.
- 3 Traders.
- 4 Craftsmen/Artisans.
- 5 Drink Interest.

Class one included the most powerful and prestigious interests in Birmingham, one that provided the town's Members of Parliament, many officers of power such as High Bailiffs, Street Commissioners and Free Grammar School Governors. Class consciousness had an important bearing upon their voting behaviour. Opposition to Parliamentary Reform and Radical activities both locally and nationally was strongest from this class. Many of them had a vested interest in retaining the status quo: disruption caused by Municipal Incorporation, Chartism and Anti Corn-Law agitation particularly affected them. As men smarting after exclusion from municipal office or frightened at the prospect of diminished power and wealth by an extended suffrage they viewed with alarm the continuing attack on their old privileged order. Clergy/Gentry et cetera was completely above intimidation from non-electors: the only influence on their free political choice was generational or neighbourhood connections.

Manufacturers were Birmingham's lifeline, despite their position in the social order. In 1849 there were five hundred and twenty 'distinctly classified manufacturers' their diffusion gave an elasticity 'unknown in towns and districts confined to the manufacture of one article or one material'.

No manufacturer rivalled the position of the cotton lords of Manchester and other large towns in the North who numbered their employees in thousands, there were few in Birmingham who employed a hundred workpeople. In their small workshops 'social gradations shelved less steeply...there was a vigorous indigenous Radicalism supported by many employers'. Nowhere was 'there to be found more freedom of intercourse between the employer and employed, or more general intelligence and comfort amongst the workpeople'.<sup>27</sup> Subject to every economic recession, manufacturers constantly grappled with a hair-line division between success and failure. Bankruptcies were frequent, particularly between 1837 and 1845; few could afford to forsake their factory for political activities. Generally manufacturers were in favour of repealing the Corn Laws and confidently expected benefits from currency reform. Before the first Municipal Elections in 1838 few held offices of authority, but several gained seats on the newly formed Corporation.

Traders were not an overtly politically conscious group, for reasons of their livelihood; few possessed the wealth or power to ignore customers. Many who signed the protest against the reconstituted BPU were victimized for their action by being included on a Union blacklist. Deference to customers was particularly evident during an election: 'the Member of Parliament for Marylebone told the House of Commons in 1852... "scarcely a tradesman in Regent Street or Bond Street was not subject to the intimidation of men of high character or rather of high station...who gave orders how to vote" '.<sup>28</sup> What appertained in Bond Street occurred in Birmingham's Bull Street: 'neighbours of a Birmingham butcher who threatened not to buy anymore meat from him unless he voted Radical'.<sup>29</sup> Intimidation was double-edged. Both political parties utilised it, though the Radicals were the most violent.

The division between craftsmen and small manufacturers is not an exact one. Doubts arise with, for example, nail makers, platers, or filemakers who could be a manufacturer with employees, or an individual craftsman working in his own garret or back-yard workshop, without employees other than members of his own family. Craftsmen were a diverse assortment of skilled

artisans, being self-employed, they were not by sociological criteria working class. Only a small portion of Birmingham's craftsmen were enfranchised and those that were barely qualified, few were involved in political activities other than voting in a parliamentary election.

The fifth class was the multifarious group comprising the 'Drink Interest'. In 1841 there were five hundred and twenty-three licensed victuallers, four hundred and ten beer retailers and fifty one wine and spirit merchants in Birmingham, few became involved in politics. Beer retailing was a lucrative trade which had rapidly developed in the town after the Beerhouse Act of 1830 allowing any householder paying poor-rates to open a beerhouse on payment of a license fee of two guineas. Licensed victuallers were regarded as the more elite vocation, though both they and the beer retailers had trade societies to protect their interests. These were very vocal at election time, and it was not unknown for one society to condemn the other for its political attitude. The drink interest was exposed to non-electors' pressure and intimidation. Prior to the 1837 and 1841 elections the Retail Brewers Protection Society passed unanimous resolutions supporting both Radical candidates and particularly in 1837, as Appendix 1 shows, there was only slight deviation from this declaration. Brewers freely published such resolutions to avoid intimidation current in the 1835 election when 'men would go into public houses, ask the landlord how he voted and if he was a Tory, they would pour his ale in the gutter, saying that they wanted a reform drink'.<sup>30</sup> In 1837 Stapleton held a meeting with thirty licensed victuallers who complained of intimidation, but expressed their determination 'to stand by and support each other in the free exercise of their votes'.<sup>31</sup> Intimidation was an all pervading force, and the drink interest was vulnerable from both sides. Victuallers were well aware they needed to petition Tory magistrates for renewal of their licences, as one explained 'I get all Tories to sign my petition as I found it of no use getting it signed by Liberals'.<sup>32</sup>

The votes cast in 1837 and 1841 elections by these five classes are shown in Table 4.6. Votes of the various occupations making-up individual classes will be found in Appendix 1, with

erosion of 1837 and compilation of the 1841 votes for each class in Appendix 2. Table 4.6 clearly illustrates the stability of both Radical candidates' election shares over all five classes between 1837 and 1841, in contrast to that of the Tory, which other than craftsmen fluctuated considerably. Figure 4.3 dramatically indicates the losses suffered by Scholefield, the gains of Spooner and the static nature of Muntz's overall support, all indelibly underlined in percentage terms in Figure 4.4 between the two elections. The Tory overall election share increased by 12.7 per cent (Table 4.7). The percentage given by each class to the leading Radical or Tory in both elections is shown in Figure 4.5 together with the consequent increase/decrease of each class between these elections.

Manufacturers were the largest of the five classes, followed by Traders, combined votes of these two classes provided Radical candidates with nearly half their total votes in both elections. Appendix 1.2 indicates support given by all types of manufacturers to the Radicals, particularly the town's four premier industries, brassfounding, button making, jewellery and gun manufacture. The distribution of the 1837 retained votes over occupational groups are shown in Figure 4.6 an interesting point being the parallel graph lines for all three candidates other than Scholefield's 'Drink Interest' despite a substantially lower percentage of retained votes for Attwood and Scholefield than Stapleton. The stability in manufacturers voting is demonstrated by the retained votes (Appendix 2.2) which were of higher percentage than Radicals retained overall (Figure 4.1). Conversely manufacturers retained by the Tories was considerably less than the overall. 1841 Voters not voting in 1837 are shown in Figure 4.7 and here again with the exception of traders the three graph lines follow a parallel pattern. This also shows manufacturers' new voters falling slightly below the overall election figures for all three candidates (Figures 4.2). Craftsmen also gave the majority of its votes to the Radicals with only the gilders/carvers deviating in 1841 (Appendix 1.4). However, craftsman's retained votes for all candidates were lower than their respective overall totals, though other than for Muntz, new voters were higher. Clergy/Gentry were

predominately Tory, gentlemen, solicitors and surgeons strongly supported the Tory candidate in both elections (Appendix 1.2), while merchants and Dissenting Ministers at the lower-end of Class 1, supported the Radicals. Had they not done this to the extent they did, Radical votes from this class as a whole would have been very meagre. Clergy/Gentry et cetera had the highest stability of 1837 retained voters, from all three candidates (Figure 4.6.) though this was compensated by the lowest number of those 'not voting in 1837' (Figure 4.7.) giving the Tories the lowest gain of 6.6 per cent (Table 4.7.). These facts suggest a high political awareness and involvement amongst Clergy/Gentry particularly the Tory Supporters. Tories gained 22.4 per cent (Table 4.7.) of the Drink Interest votes, but the stark figures of Table 4.6. hide the interesting fact of the massive support given to the Radicals in 1837 by retail brewers and licensed victuallers and the swing to the Tories in 1841 (Appendix 1.5) - 1,400 per cent retail brewers, 205 per cent licensed victuallers. Appendix 1.3 highlights the Traders increased support for the Tories in 1841 particularly of butchers and grocers, though boot/shoe makers, pawnbrokers and tobacconists remained strongly Radical. The erosion of the 1837 Traders votes and the compilation of the 1841 (Appendix 2.3) shows Spooner conspicuously successful in gaining Traders votes of the 1837 Non-voters whilst retaining the support of those that voted, in contrast to the reduced support for Muntz and particularly Scholefield from new voters in this class.

The findings that emerge from this data are not conclusive. Evidence clearly shows that the most powerful and probably the wealthiest class the clergy, gentry, bankers supported the Tories in both elections, in 1837 to the extent of over 51 per cent when Tories only had 32.7 overall share of the Poll, this was particularly evident at the upper-end of the class i.e. Clergy and Gentry. On the other hand Manufacturers, one step down the social ladder, were predominately Radical probably for reasons more economic than social. The position with the other classes is less clear. The 1837 election was one of lowest Tory support in the period, whereas the 1841 election was second highest. Nothing is contributed by knowing that there was an 18.1. swing

by Traders and 22.4. per cent by the 'Drink Interest' to the Tories in solving the problem of trying to establish whether socio-economic class was a major determinant in voting behaviour for these two classes.

TABLE 4.6. VOTES AND PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL FOR EACH TRADE AND OCCUPATION.

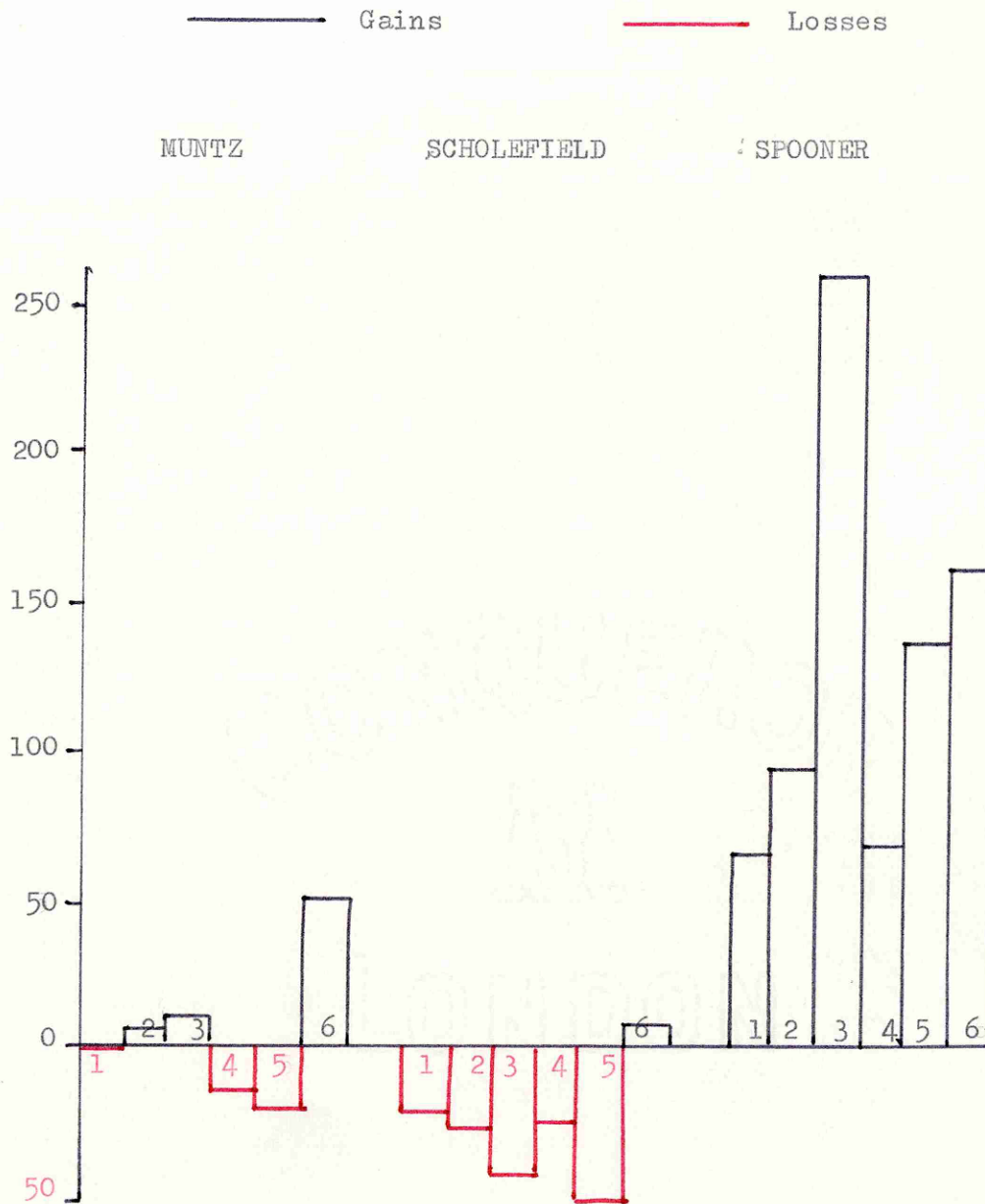
		1837					
		Attwood		Scholefield		Stapleton	
		Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
1	Clergy/Gentry						
	Bankers/Merchants	202	9.4.	208	9.9.	215	20.6.
2	Manufacturers	585	27.3.	575	27.2.	245	23.4.
3	Traders	474	22.1.	463	21.9.	218	20.8.
4	Craftsmen/						
	Artisans	212	9.9.	201	9.5.	87	8.3.
5	Drink Interest	325	15.2.	310	14.6.	74	7.1.
	Unknown Trades	347	16.1.	357	16.9.	207	19.8.
1837 Total Votes		2,145	100%	2,114	100%	1,046	100%

		1841					
		Muntz		Scholefield		Spooner	
		Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
1	Clergy/Gentry						
	Bankers/Merchants	200	9.2.	186	9.4.	279	15.8.
2	Manufacturers	591	27.2.	549	27.9.	338	17.9.
3	Traders	484	22.2.	419	21.5.	476	26.1.
4	Craftsmen/						
	Artisans	198	9.1.	176	9.0.	152	8.3.
5	Drink Interest	306	14.1.	258	13.1.	212	11.7.
	Unknown Trades	396	18.2.	375	19.1.	368	20.2.
1841 Total Votes		2,175	100%	1,963	100%	1,825	100%

TABLE 4.7. 1841 TORY GAIN OF ELECTION SHARES OCCUPATION/TRADES

		%
Overall Election Share.		12.7
1	Clergy/Gentry	
	Bankers/Merchants	6.6
2	Manufacturers	6.9
3	Traders	18.1
4	Craftsmen	14.3
5	Drink Interest	22.4
	Unknown Trades	10.8

FIGURE 4.3. NUMBERS : LOSSES/GAINS PER TRADE/OCCUPATION  
1841 COMPARED WITH 1837



- 1 CLERGY/GENTRY/BANKERS
- 2 MANUFACTURERS
- 3 TRADERS
- 4 CRAFTSMEN/ARTISANS
- 5 DRINK INTEREST
- 6 UNKNOWN TRADES



FIGURE 4.4. PERCENTAGES : LOSSES/GAINS PER TRADE/  
OCCUPATION 1841 COMPARED WITH 1837





FIGURE 4.5. PERCENTAGE ELECTION SHARE OF EACH TRADE/  
OCCUPATION 1837 and 1841 : LEADING RADICAL WITH TORY

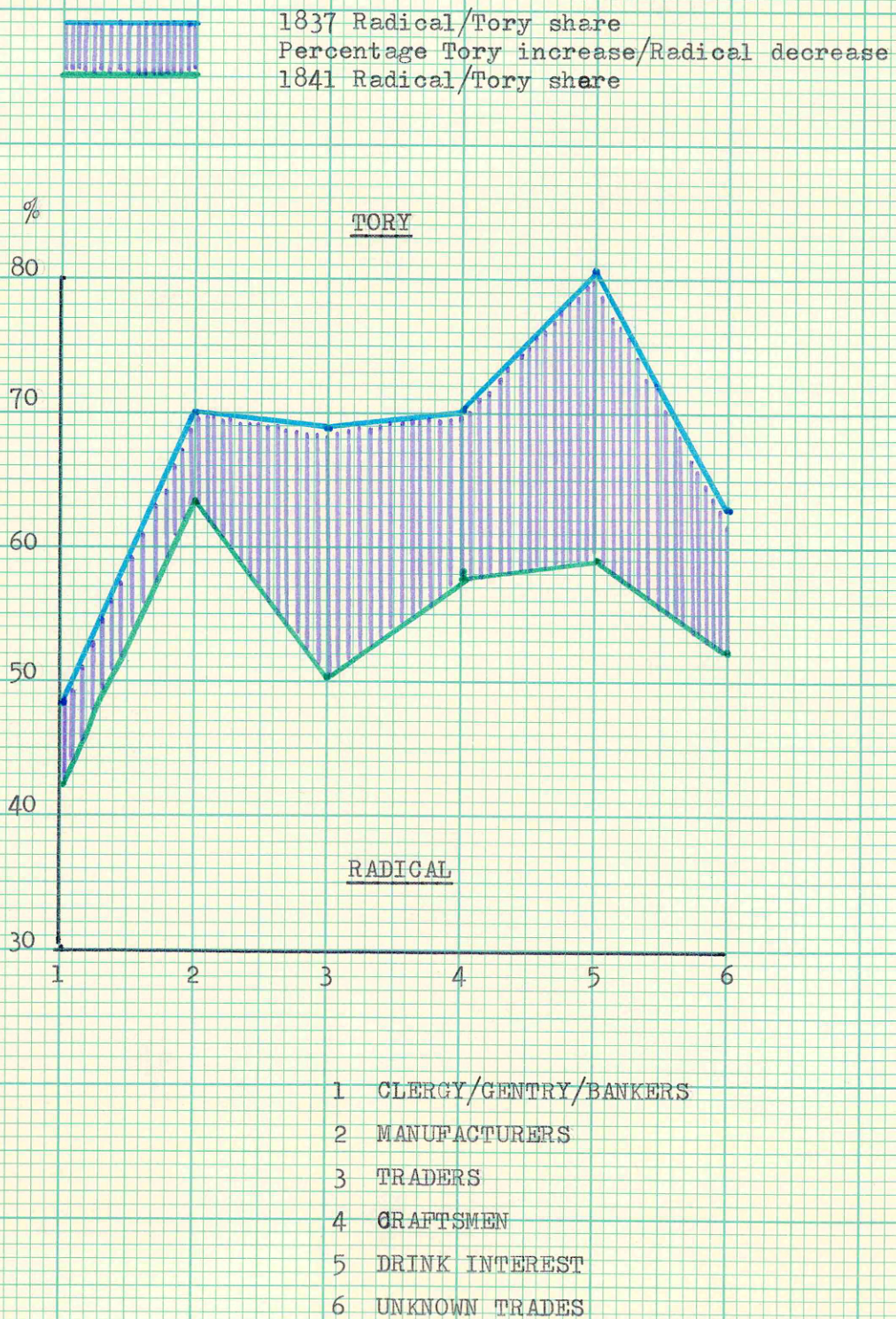
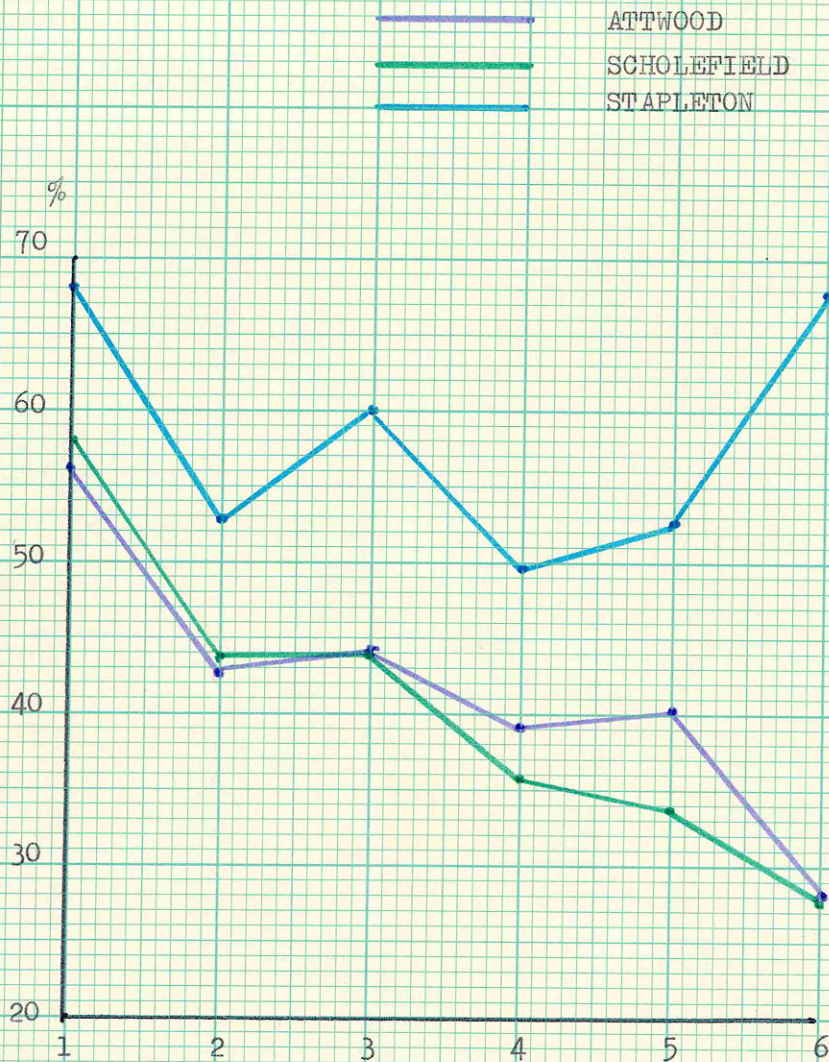




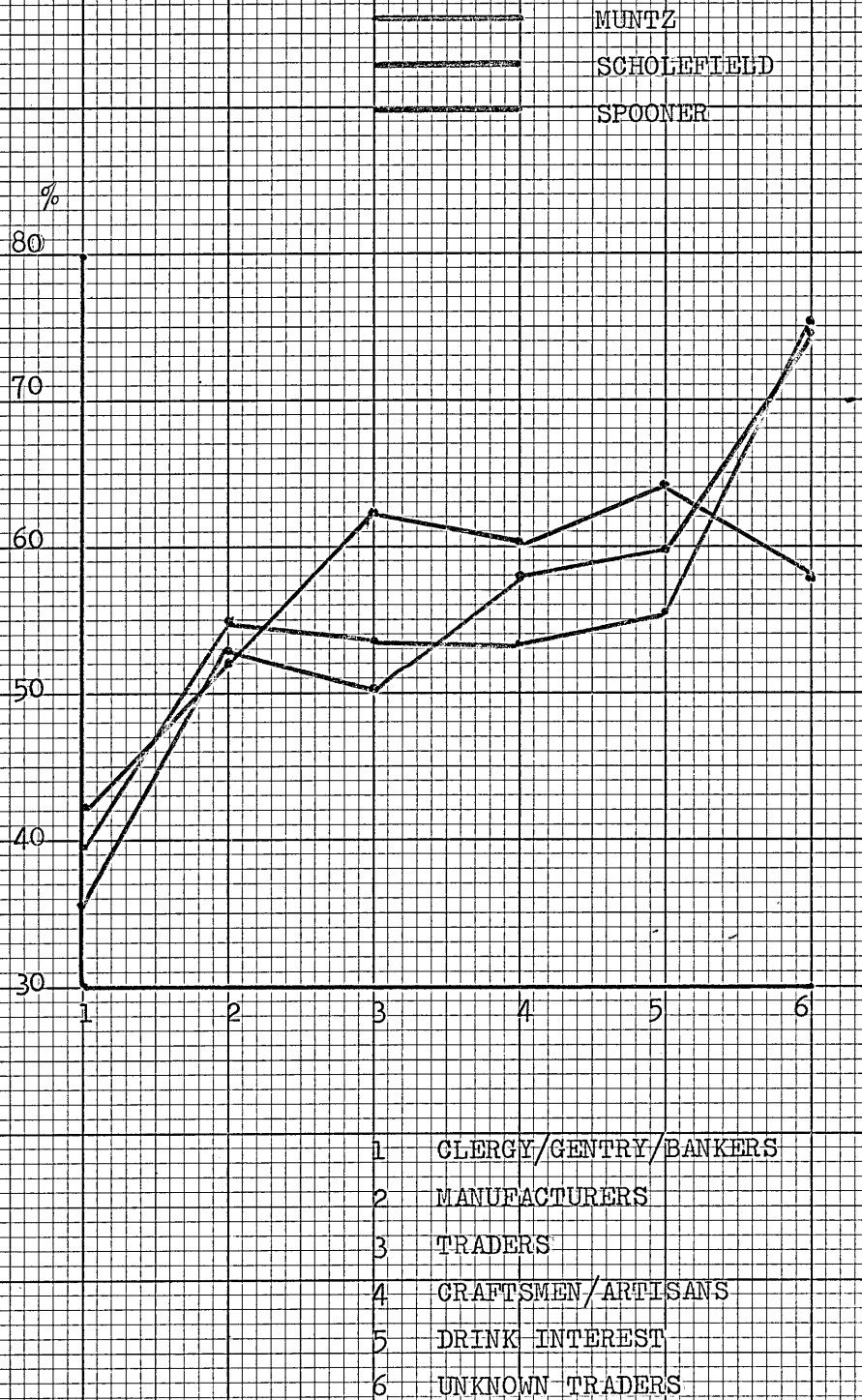
FIGURE 4.6. PERCENTAGE OF 1837 VOTES RETAINED IN 1841  
TRADE/OCCUPATIONS, : APPENDIX 2 LINE 6.



- 1 CLERGY/GENTRY/BANKERS
- 2 MANUFACTURERS
- 3 TRADERS
- 4 CRAFTSMEN/ARTISANS
- 5 DRINK INTEREST
- 6 UNKNOWN TRADES



FIGURE 4.7. PERCENTAGE OF EACH TRADE/OCCUPATION 1841 VOTERS  
WHO DID NOT VOTE IN 1837 : APPENDIX 2 LINE 9.



#### 4.5. Religious Voting in 1837 and 1841 Parliamentary Elections.

With 38.3. per cent limitations on electorate's known religious beliefs in 1837, 24.6 per cent of Anglicans voted Radical, 75.3 per cent Tory and there were thirty-nine Anglican cross-voters. All Dissenters voted Radical other than ten Wesleyans - three Tory plumpers, seven cross voters; Figure 4.8. illustrates the dominance of Anglicans voting Tory, a trend which strongly suggests that the remaining 33.1. per cent of Stapleton's voters were also Anglicans with few, if any Dissenters other than Wesleyans. Given this information and the comparative ease of discovering those of Anglican faith, matched against the difficulty of finding Nonconformists, it can be presumed that Dissenting religions provided two-thirds or even three-quarters of the Radical candidate's votes in the 1837 election.

Figure 4.9. shows a similar pattern for the 1841 election with a 35.8 per cent of known religious beliefs: Anglicans supporting Radicals dropped to 14.9 per cent; twenty-eight Anglicans who cross-voted in 1837 plumped for Spooner and this time Anglican cross-party voters increased to sixty-three. Fifty-four cross-voted Spooner and Muntz, but only nine cross-voted Spooner and Scholefield, hence the greater number of Anglicans voting for Muntz shown in Figure 4.9. Dissenters again strongly supported Radical candidates, though on this occasion support was not total - thirteen Wesleyans plumped for Spooner and eight cross-voted; eleven other Dissenters voted Tory eight of these were cross-voters; Dissenter divergence however, was slight by comparison with the total who polled. Again there was a tendency for Dissenters to support Scholefield in preference to Muntz as had happened in 1837 when Attwood was the other candidate.

It is a feature of Table 4.8, that the percentage of 1837 realigned votes (Line 7) for, both Radical candidates was far higher than the overall election percentage (Table 4.1. Line.7). It was the new voters (Line 8 ) - those not voting in 1837 - which were dramatically low; e.g. Muntz 36 and 33 per cent compared with an overall 57 per cent (Figure 4.2) and Scholefield 33.8 and 26.8 per cent compared with an overall 55.9 per cent.

FIGURE 4.8. ANGLICAN/DISSENTER VOTING IN THE 1837 ELECTION  
 (38.3% of Total Electorate)

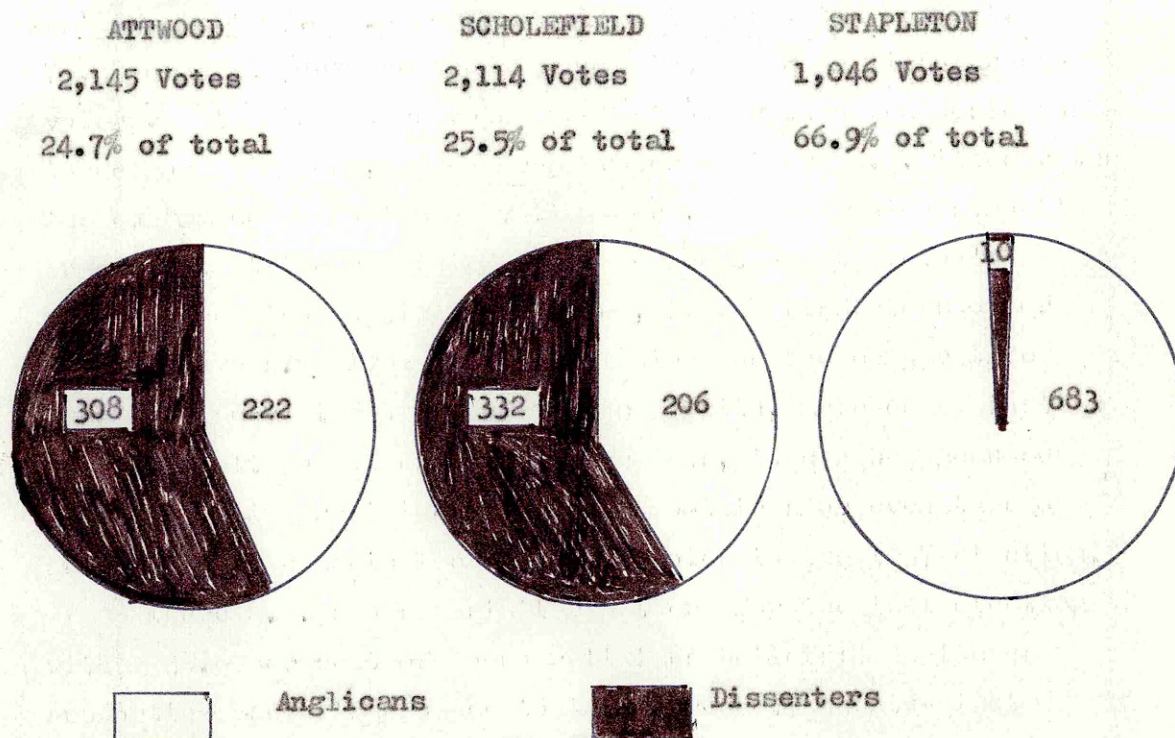
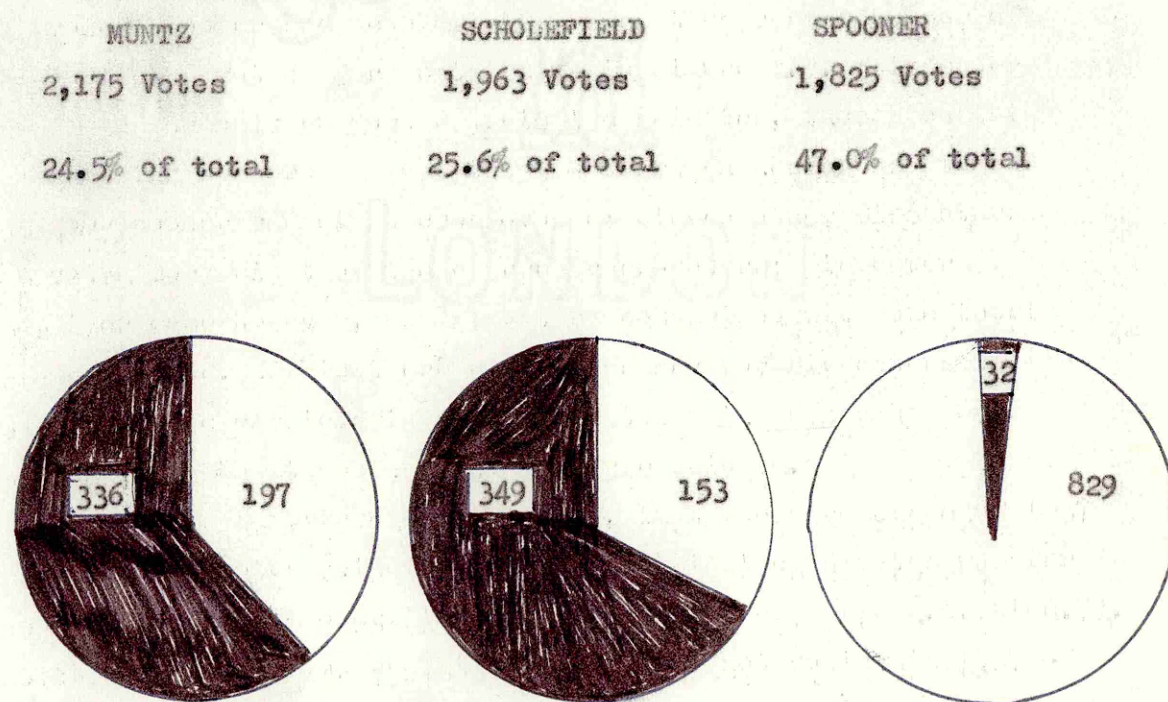


FIGURE 4.9. ANGLICAN/DISSENTER VOTING IN THE 1841 ELECTION.  
 (35.8% of Total Electorate)



**TABLE 4.8. EROSION OF THE 1837 RELIGIOUS VOTES AND THE  
COMPILATION OF THE 1841 FOR THE TWO RADICAL CANDIDATES.**  
(Calculated on the percentage of identified religious  
belief as shown in Figures 4.8 and 4.9,p.78)

		<u>ATTWOOD</u>		<u>SCHOLEFIELD</u>	
		Dissenters	Anglican	Dissenters	Anglican
1	1837 Poll	308	222	332	206
2/3	Non Voters/ Non Registered	90	60	94	63
4	Votes lost to Tory	3	30	7	31
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
7	1837 Votes Realigned	215 (69.9%)	132 (59.9%)	231 (69.6%)	112 (59.2%)
8	Voters not voting in 1837	121 (36.0%)	65 (33.0%)	118 (33.8%)	41 (26.8%)
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
9	1841 Poll	336	197	349	153
		<u>MUNTZ</u>		<u>SCHOLEFIELD</u>	

It is appropriate at this point to indicate that by supporting Radical candidates Anglicans were demonstrating that religion was not the dominant determinant of party preference. For the purpose of this study socio-economic class was the only alternative factor to religion and these two are combined in Table 4.9. This shows that a comparatively large number of Anglican Manufacturers supported the Radicals, though like the other classes there was a substantial drop in support between 1837 and 1841. Table 4.10 illustrates the socio-economic class of the Dissenter vote; here again Manufacturers were the largest group. Deference to customers by Traders may have been responsible for only three Dissenting Tory plumpers, other than Wesleyans in 1841, but intimidation could have been the reason that thirty-three Anglican Traders voted Radical in 1837, whereas only ten did in 1841. On this evidence unlike class voting as a whole (Table 4.6), Dissenter support from all five classes was consistently Radical in both elections.

The various tables and figures in this section based on identifiable religious beliefs provide some evidence to justify the claim that there was religious motivation in a voters' choice of political party, and that Dissenters voted in deference to

their religion rather than economic class. Whether Anglicans did the same is difficult to determine, certainly those who supported the Radicals would appear to have had economic or political reasons. However, it must be stressed that these figures are based, not on a sample or percentage of the religious beliefs of the entire electorate, but the number of such beliefs it has been possible to identify. The findings have therefore to be viewed within that context.

**TABLE 4.9. ANGLICANS VOTING FOR RADICAL CANDIDATES.**

**1837** Total of known Anglicans voting.....895  
Total number of voters.....3,153

	Known Anglicans	% of Total Known Anglic'	No of these plumping Rad'	Cross Voters
Clergy/Gentry				
Bankers/Merch'	198	22.1.	32	16.2%
Manufacturers	287	32.1.	98	34.1%
Traders	187	20.9.	33	17.6%
Craftsmen	76	8.5.	18	23.7%
Drink Interest	68	7.6.	27	39.7%
Unknown Trades	79	8.8.	12	15.2%
	895	100.0	220	39

Known Anglicans voting Radical 24.6%

Known Anglicans cross-voting 4.3%

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**1841** Total of known Anglicans voting.....952  
Total number of voters..... 3,777

	Known Anglicans	% of Total Known Anglic'	No of these plumping Rad'	Cross Voters
Clergy/Gentry				
Bankers/Merch'	208	21.8.	23	11.1%
Manufacturers	279	29.3.	64	22.9%
Traders	187	19.6.	10	5.3%
Craftsmen	88	9.5.	14	15.9%
Drink Interest	73	7.5.	16	21.9%
Unknown Trades	117	12.3.	15	12.8%
	952	100.0.	142	63

Known Anglicans voting Radical 14.9%

Known Anglicans cross-voting 6.6%

TABLE 4.10. DISSENTERS VOTING FOR RADICAL CANDIDATES.

1837. Total of known Dissenters voting.....337  
 Total number of voters.....3,153

	Known Dissenters	% of Total known Dissenters	Radical Plumpers	Wesleyans Tory Cross Plump' Voter	Dissenter Plum Cross Tory Voter
Clergy/Gentry					
Bankers/Merch'	76	22.5.	76		
Manufacturers	122	36.2.	116	3	3
Traders	92	27.3.	91		1
Craftsmen	16	4.8.	16		
Drink Interest	12	3.6.	12		
Unknown Trades	19	5.6.	16		3

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337	100.0.	327	3	7
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Known Dissenters voting Radical 97.1%

Known Dissenters cross-voting 2.1%

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1841. Total of known Dissenters voting.....373  
 Total number of voters.....3,777

	Known Dissenters	% of Total known Dissenters	Radical Plumpers	Wesleyans Tory Cross Plump' Voter	Dissenter Plum Cross Tory Vote
Clergy/Gentry					
Bankers/Merch'	75	20.1.	72	2	1
Manufacturers	122	32.7.	112	6	3
Traders	105	28.2.	93	5	2
Craftsmen	21	5.6.	20		1
Drink Interest	10	2.7.	10		
Unknown Trades	40	10.7.	34	3	3

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373	100.0.	341	13	8	3	8
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Known Dissenters voting Radical 91.4%

Known Dissenters cross-voting 4.3%



#### 4.6. Voting by Rating District.

A breakdown of voting for the 1837 and 1841 Parliamentary Elections over the twelve rating districts of Birmingham is summarised in Table 4.11 and Figure 4.10.<sup>33</sup> In 1837 Edgbaston was the only district where the Tory candidate polled the larger share of votes: in 1841 the Tory candidate won a majority in four, St Philips, St Peters, Edgbaston and Deritend, making gains in all districts ranging from 7 per cent in Edgbaston to 22 per cent in All Saints.

The higher than average voting involvement of Edgbaston's predominately Tory residents in 1837 resulted in the low Tory gain in this district in 1841. A corollary of high voting involvement of socio-economic Class 1. (Clergy/Gentry/Bankers/Merchants); nearly 50 per cent of whom were resident in Edgbaston. Unlike the other eleven districts Edgbaston was entirely residential; four fifths of its property was held on ninety-nine year leases in the two thousand acre estate of Lord Calthorpe, who maintained its high character by the imposition of strict building regulations. Edgbaston was rightly regarded as the wealthiest district in the Borough - seven hundred and sixty-five of its one thousand and eighteen houses paid rates of £10 or over (Table 4.1). It was populated by professional men, traders and the large manufacturers, all sufficiently affluent to reside away from their business premises. Figure 4.10 demonstrates its position as a Tory stronghold: the pressures to conform to this neighbourhood norm in voting behaviour, overt or otherwise, must have been considerable.

St. Philip's Church gave its name to the affluent rating district around it. The solicitors and bankers of Cherry Street, high class tradesmen in Bull Street and New Street contributed significantly to its voting figures. It was inevitable that Radical's slim majority in 1837 should be lost here in the changed political climate of 1841. Though not having the same homogeneity as a social district, St Peters also contained an area of affluent traders in the town centre, mainly in the High Street and Bull Ring. Given the increase of Traders support for the Tories in 1841, already examined in Section 4.4 and with the extent of the trader's voting strength in St Peters,

it is not surprising that both districts should have a Tory majority.

The mainly manufacturing districts such as All Saints, St Marys, St Georges and the jewellery manufacturing quarter of St Pauls were predominately Radical in both elections, though in several their 1841 majority was decidedly marginal. Clergy/Gentry/Bankers/Merchants were not very numerous in these districts and away from the boundaries of the town-centre there were not a great number of traders either. In the maze of back streets, courts and passages of these districts, resided the craftsmen and working class.

Some historians have attempted the correlation of voting behaviour with elector's wealth measured from the rateable value of his property.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately such an exercise for this study was only possible in the wholly residential rating district of Edgbaston owing to a high proportion of Birmingham voters residing at their business premises, which invariably carried a higher rateable value than that of residential property. In Edgbaston the average rateable value for one hundred<sup>and</sup>/ninety-six Tory voters in 1841 was £24.7. and for one hundred and thirty-six Radical voters the average was £23.3. The highest individual rateable value for a Tory voter was £215, for a Radical - a Dissenting physician - £190.

Evidence from this section suggests that the wealthy and the wealthier districts tended to be Tory voters; but such a bald statement begs too many questions to have much meaning.

**TABLE 4.11. SHARE OF VOTES IN THE 1837 AND 1841 ELECTIONS  
BY RATING DISTRICTS**

	1837		1841		Tory Gain
	Radical %	Tory %	Radical %	Tory %	
St Peters	62	38	45	55	17
St Pauls	66	34	53	47	13
St Martins	72	28	62	38	10
St Philips	59	41	38	62	21
St Thomas's	71	29	55	45	16
Ladywood	66	34	54	46	12
All Saints	78	22	56	44	22
St Marys	75	25	64	36	11
St Georges	79	21	63	37	16
Duddeston/ Nechells	72	28	55	45	17
Deritend/ Bordesley	64	36	47	53	17
Edgbaston	48	52	41	59	7



FIGURE 4.10. PERCENTAGE VOTING BY RATING DISTRICT





#### 4.7. Parliamentary Elections of 1844 and 1847.

During the early 1840s there were considerable changes in Birmingham's political alignments. Lacking the uniformity of a now moribund 'Reformer' label, divisions in Liberal and Radical interests became a permanent feature of Birmingham politics after 1841. Meanwhile the Tories challenge grew in strength in part the consequence of their reluctant acceptance of the inevitability of Parliamentary Reform and Municipal Incorporation. Radicalism remained strong in the town, but not with voters and few Radicals were enfranchised. Many BPU stalwarts had already departed from the political arena, those remaining referred to themselves as Liberals, treating the changeover as a natural progression, rather than any volte face; thereby highlighting the problem of attaching party-tags in a period when politicians' party was less well defined. The demise of Radical politicians reflected the national pattern, few remained in Parliament after 1841. However, while the middle class moved to respectable Liberalism, the mass of the working class in the town remained solidly Radical looking to Chartism for improvement in their living standards.

Among the middle class there was little enthusiasm for further parliamentary or any church reform: gradualism was the order of the day, many felt events had already moved too rapidly and the gains needed to be consolidated. The repeal of the Corn Laws was a polemical point; currency reform retained some of its earlier impetus though enthusiasm waned for it rapidly after 1847. But there were no town meetings to petition parliament for separation of church and state and the church rate issue still remained an arbitrary victory, not a statutory one. The majority of the enfranchised middle class were interested in maintaining their privileged position, pursuing their business interests and voting for the political party most likely to benefit them. Only a small minority of philanthropists among them were interested in improving the lives of others less fortunate. Joseph Sturge's CSU was an attempt to restore equanimity between the middle and working classes, but Birmingham electors generally recoiled in horror from the thought of an extended suffrage. Having utilized

Radical elements to obtain their vote and accepted Incorporation, the middle classes then became frightened by the militancy of Chartism.

A trial of strength for the new alignment came in a Parliamentary election that followed the death of Joshua Scholefield in 1844. Liberals and Radicals paid the penalty for their separation, when for the first time a Tory was elected to represent Birmingham. Arguably the tendency of by-elections to disrupt the political equilibrium was again demonstrated, but the Liberal - Radical split had made this Tory victory a strong possibility from the outset. Only one hundred and thirty-eight votes separated Scholefield and Spooner in 1841: in 1844 there were three candidates with only one seat; Liberals proposed William Scholefield, Radicals Joseph Sturge and Richard Spooner stood for the Tories.

The dominant issue in this election was the candidate's personal record and reputation. Voters applauded Sturge's anti-slavery efforts in the West Indies, his magnanimity towards the underprivileged, but disapproved of his association with the polemical CSU. Scholefield was opposed to complete suffrage; though support for him was not wholehearted, responsibility for bringing London police into Birmingham to quell the Chartist riots in 1839 and accusations of failing in his Alderman's duty by non-attendance at Council meetings prejudiced his chances. Conversely, Spooner other than his High Churchmanship, was free from the provocative political involvements of Municipal Incorporation, Chartism and the like in the town during the last few years. He had nursed the constituency for a number of years, was locally popular, a currency reformist and importantly belonged to a political party whose fortunes were in the ascendancy, though he confessed 'He was no Peelite...'

All three candidates made a deliberate attempt to attract the important Dissenting votes. There was a broad religious base to both Scholefield's and Sturge's election committee. Unitarians demonstrated their innate Liberalism by joining Scholefield; George Edmonds again nominated Sturge and Councillor J.C.Perry another Baptist chaired his committee. Spooner reiterated his 'Church of England principles', an

assurance Tories optimistically felt 'would be welcome to the great body of our Dissenting friends' who would 'surely give him their undivided support' <sup>35</sup>

Spooner won with an overall majority of fourteen votes.

#### 1844 ELECTION

	<u>Votes</u>
Spooner.....	2,095
Scholefield.....	1,735
Sturge.....	346

The Tories were overjoyed with the result, which they saw as 'the rapid increase of Conservative principles in this town'.<sup>36</sup> Spooner must have received some Dissenters' votes, though his overall majority was mainly due to vexations of Liberal - Radical disunity, rather than any movement towards Tory High-Church ideology, helped by Scholefield making no personal contribution to his own campaign owing to his father's death. This was Sturge's fourth attempt to become a local M.P.,<sup>37</sup> without success. His Quaker altruism was far too Radical for the electorate: non-electors concerned him as much as electors, his comments on the result were typical:

Amongst many other evils arising out of the present system of Representation is this in that it greatly tends to destroy the sympathy of feeling between those who possess their political rights and those who do not possess them. This was seldom more strikingly exemplified than on the present occasion'.<sup>38</sup>

The following table divides polling into the thirteen Municipal wards of the town. This indicates Scholefield won a majority of votes in three traditional Liberal enclaves: the industrial districts of All Saints, Hampton and St Georges. In all others Spooner achieved the highest proportion. Sturge's support was poor, other than Duddeston, a Radical district of the Parish of Aston where he was only eleven votes behind Scholefield.

	<u>Scholefield</u>	<u>Spooner</u>	<u>Sturge</u>
Ladywood	68	80	16
All Saints	153	138	12
Hampton	206	118	19
St Georges	175	161	21
St Marys	106	119	25
St Pauls	108	115	15
Market Hall	105	161	15
St Peters (1)	86	62	10

St Peters (2)	105	215	16
St Martins	72	114	9
St Thomas's	133	135	17
Edgbaston	157	226	21
Deritend/Bordesley	149	224	49
Duddeston/Nechells	112	227	101
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,735	2,095	346

(Source Aris's Birmingham Gazette 15 July 1844)

There was a three year gap again before the next Parliamentary election in 1847. In the interim period renewal of the grant to the Roman Catholic College at Maynooth and Corn Law repeal dramatically revived political awareness: a branch of the British Ant-State Church Association established in the town by Joseph Sturge and George Edmonds revived Dissenter interest in political matters. Several issues predominated throughout the election campaign notably currency reform, Free Trade and Chartism. It was also an opportunity for intense religious antagonism. (See Appendix 3). Each candidate was compelled to state his attitude on these questions; particularly involved were Roman Catholics and Jews.

Spooner's attitude in the House of Commons had been that Roman Catholicism was blasphemous and he opposed Robert Peel's increased grant to Maynooth. He adamantly opposed removal of the Jewish disabilities, maintaining he would not allow the Jewish Baron Rothschild a seat in Parliament until he took the oath and acted on Christian principles. Insisting that 'The Protestant Constitution was a bulwark of our liberties' Spooner entered the election campaign maintaining that 'Protestant people must not be mixed up with idolotry'. Such High Church doctrine was continuously under attack and he was severely censured for his views by the popular Baptist Minister George Dawson.

The three other candidates, all Anglicans, expressed more Liberal views. Muntz objected to the connections between Church and State; Scholefield stated that while sincerely attached to Church of England doctrines, he was against a distinction 'which was unjust to all who conscientiously dissent from her doctrines'. The fourth candidate Serjeant Allen made the right gestures by presenting himself as 'sincerely attached to the Protestant



Church',<sup>39</sup> without committing himself further.

In the absence of an avowed Radical standing this time, Liberals attempted to overcome a repeat of the harmful disunity in their ranks which had marred the 1844 campaign, but Muntz upset arrangements by refusing to associate with them or Scholefield. Tories naturally welcomed this dissension amongst their opponents. Muntz's autocratic attitude since entering Parliament alienated many former friends: he was lukewarm to Corn Law repeal, continuing to advocate currency reform, an issue that was becoming increasingly unpopular. Muntz's election address was directed not at Liberals or Radicals, but at the 'Independent Electors' and he refuted accusations of inconsistency by publishing his 1840 election address also directed at 'Independent Electors'. Muntz maintained that Serjeant Allen had been sent to contest the seat by Joseph Parkes, the Liberal Agent, because Muntz would not be Parkes' 'Tool in the House'. Parkes denied this, condemning Muntz for separating from his old political alliance and accusing him of being 'something of a Tory'. This charge received added weight when the Tories recommended return of the sitting members - Muntz and Spooner -, and Muntz's own remarks that he would not join Scholefield because of 'the respect he bore Spooner' <sup>40</sup>

The election result was as follows:-

1847 ELECTION

	<u>Votes</u>
Muntz.....	2,830
Scholefield.....	2,824
Spooner.....	2,302
Allen.....	89

A significant result which hid 'the full extent of the growing rejection of currency reform in Birmingham'...only 5½ per cent cast their votes across party lines ( the rest either plumped or split between candidates of the same party) and this in an election where there were circumstances encouraging a cross party vote'.<sup>41</sup> It was a particularly satisfying result for Scholefield who came close to heading the poll, after his rejection in 1844. He had advocated repeal of the Corn Laws since 1839, and more than any of the other three candidates, personified the popular image of a Liberal Member of Parliament;

a successful businessman, responsive rather than progressive in ideas and experienced in local politics. This election demonstrated above all else the extent Birmingham politics and even more its politicians had moved in the fifteen years since becoming a parliamentary borough.

There were changes in the voting pattern this time in the various Municipal districts. Edgbaston remained predominately Tory; but only three votes separated Spooner and Scholefield in the combined districts of St Peters with Scholefield polling more votes in these districts than Muntz. However, Muntz headed the poll in the traditionally Liberal industrial districts of All Saints, Hampton, St Georges and the jewellery manufacturing quarter of St Pauls.

	<u>Spooner</u>	<u>Muntz</u>	<u>Scholefield</u>	<u>Allen</u>
Ladywood	121	110	97	1
All Saints	140	256	235	3
Hampton	107	300	266	1
St Georges	174	324	308	3
St Marys	118	174	174	23
St Pauls	116	188	177	5
Market Hall	111	148	137	9
St Peters	293	279	290	9
St Martins	132	128	127	8
St Thomas's	159	220	219	4
Edgbaston	288	191	222	8
Deritend/Bordesley	283	264	264	7
Duddeston/Nechells	260	248	308	8
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,302	2,830	2,824	89

(Source Aris's Birmingham Gazette 9 August 1847.)

After six Parliamentary elections in twelve years Birmingham electors were now destined to wait a further twelve years for another, when for the first time they elected a Dissenter - John Bright as their MP.

Psephological analysis of the four Parliamentary elections in Birmingham during the 1840s is bedevilled by problems: lack of sources, a different number of candidates standing in each election and confusing regarding what party a candidate represented, if indeed he represented any. The only permanent variable was that there was one Tory candidate in all elections: in three out of four it was Richard Spooner, we also have a

list of votes cast in each election in all the thirteen Municipal districts of the town.

Figure 4.11 illustrates the Tory candidates position in the four Parliamentary elections of the 1840s over the Municipal Wards. In examining this several factors have to be kept in mind.

There was a different combination of candidates and seats in each one of these four Parliamentary elections i.e. in 1840 two candidates, one seat; 1847 four candidates two seats.

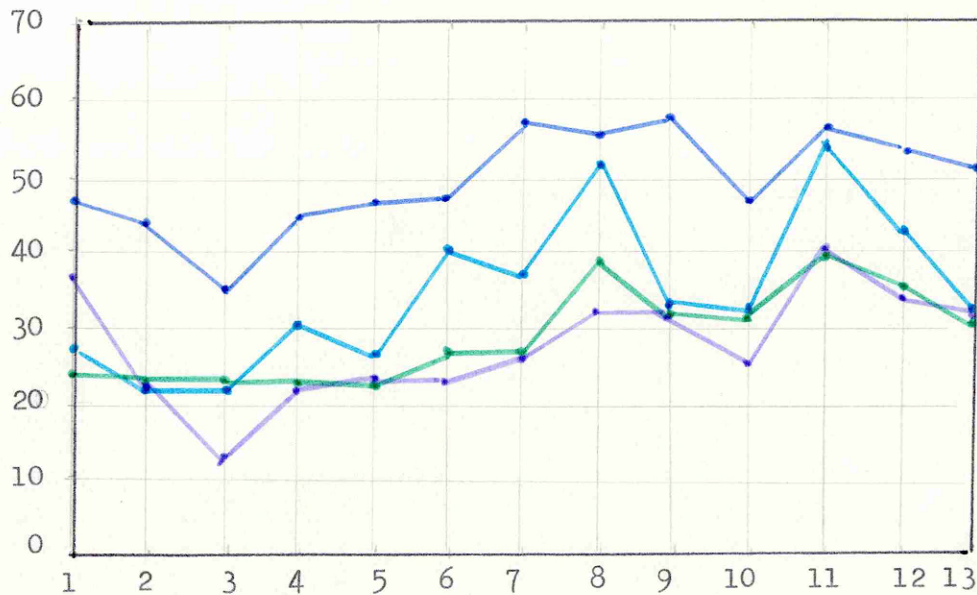
The presence of one candidate who received a very small share of the votes. In 1844 and 1847 the Tory candidate's share in relation to the mean figure was exaggerated disproportionately to 1840 and 1841.

These Municipal districts or wards established in 1838 only coincide exactly with the Rating districts examined in Section 4.6 in the Rating district of Edgbaston and the two districts that comprise the Parish of Aston - Deritend/Bordesley and Duddeston cum Nechells. In the Parish of Birmingham there were nine rating districts and ten municipal districts (see map p.9 ).

Figure 4.11 reveals the continuity of the recognised wealthy Edgbaston district as a safe Tory stronghold throughout the 1840s. This has also been demonstrated for 1837 and 1841 in the rating analysis (Section 4.6). The cosmopolitan district of St Peters, populated with poor working class around the new railway depot and canal basin and high class traders in the town's main trading area of High Street and parts of New Street, was also a safe Tory ward. St Martins an area around the parish church and the adjoining ward of Deritend in Aston which straddled the main London Road, supported the Tories in 1841, 1844 and 1847. Indications are that the more industrial the area, the more liklihood it was to be Liberal. Other than 1844 when Tory support rose above the mean average in all thirteen Municipal districts; the mainly industrial districts of Hampton, All Saints, St Georges, the gun-making area of St Marys and the jewellery quarter of St Pauls all supported the Liberals. The work of dividing the town into Municipal wards was, as noted above, (p.38) attributed to Joseph Parkes. The map of Birmingham page 9 , distinctly shows the division of support in the various Municipal wards, Liberal/Radical to the North, Tory to the South. In 1847 only St Thomas's breaks an otherwise south of

the town Tory monopoly. In 1847 added to the four wards that were above the mean in 1841 was Ladywood, the Broad Street area around Bingley Hall residence of banker James Lloyd, and Market Hall which bordered New Street and the elite district developing in the vicinity of the new Town Hall, also became Tory.

FIGURE 4.11. TORY CANDIDATE'S PERCENTAGE SHARE OF THE 1840, 1841, 1844 and 1847 POLL BY MUNICIPAL DISTRICT.



Key:- See map following page,  
and 'Above Mean' below

<span style="color: red;">—</span>	1840, 2 CANDIDATES, 1 Seat, 50% Mean.
<span style="color: green;">—</span>	1841, 3 CANDIDATES, 2 Seats, 33.3% Mean.
<span style="color: blue;">—</span>	1844, 3 CANDIDATES, 1 Seat, 33.3% Mean.
<span style="color: purple;">—</span>	1847, 4 CANDIDATES, 2 Seats, 25% Mean.

ABOVE MEAN

1840

St Peters (8)  
Edgbaston (11)

1841

St Peters (8)  
St Martins (9)

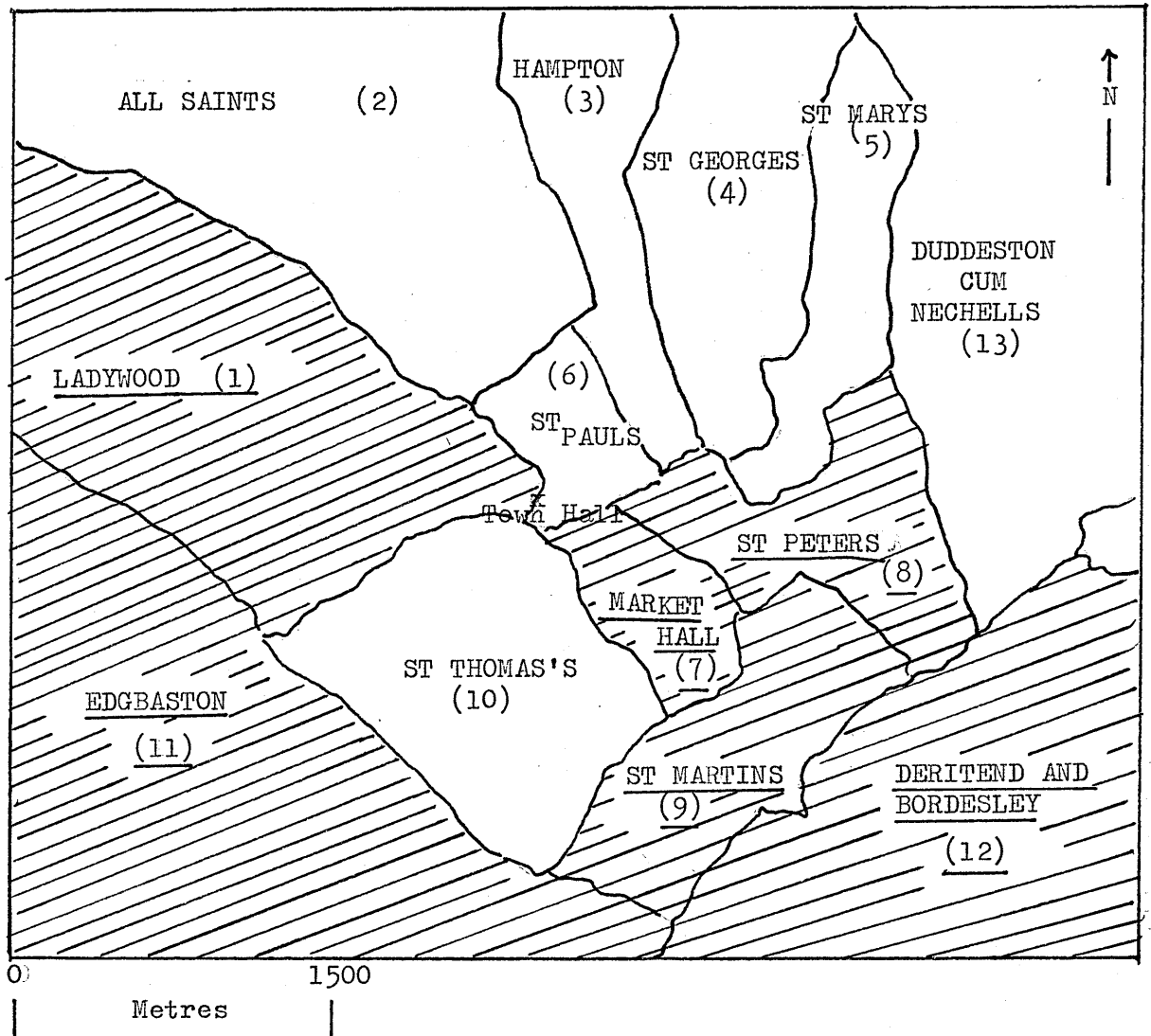
1844

Ladywood (1)  
All Saints (2)  
Hampton (3)  
St Georges (4)  
St Marys (5)  
St Pauls (6)  
Market Hall (7)  
St Peters (8)  
St Martins (9)  
St Thomas's (10)  
Edgbaston (11)  
Deritend/  
Bordesley (12)  
Duddeston/  
Nechells (13)

1847

Ladywood (1)  
Market Hall (7)  
St Peters (8)  
St Martins (9)  
Edgbaston (11)  
Deritend/  
Bordesley (12)

MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS OF BIRMINGHAM, ASTON and EDGBASTON  
created after Incorporation.



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- 1 Vincent (1972) p.15
- 2 Birmingham Journal 20 December 1834
- 3 Aris's Birmingham Gazette 22 December 1834
- 4 Birmingham Advertiser 18 December 1834
- 5 See Birmingham Advertiser 27 November 1834. Which carried an 'Advertisement', it is said that the Whigs are to support Scholefield and the Radicals a Whig candidate in the place of Attwood'.
- 6 Birmingham Journal 29 November 1834
- 7 Birmingham Journal 20 December 1834
- 8 Birmingham Journal 27 December 1834
- 9 Birmingham Advertiser 15 January 1835
- 10 It was estimated by P.H.Muntz at the time there were 300 Whig, 1000 Radical/Whig and 2000 Radical voters with 1000 Tories in Birmingham. See speech in Birmingham Journal 10 November 1838.
- 11 Birmingham Journal 1 July 1837
- 12 Birmingham Journal 24 December 1836
- 13 See Birmingham Journal 1 July 1837, Stapleton was replying to questions put by T.Ryland, a prominent Unitarian.
- 14 Birmingham Journal 1 July 1837
- 15 See Gash (1969) p.145
- 16 Birmingham Journal 7 September 1839
- 17 Birmingham Advertiser 23 January 1840
- 18 Birmingham Journal 11 January 1840
- 19 Birmingham Journal 18 January 1840
- 20 See Birmingham Journal 25 January 1840 which maintained there were 4,600 registered.
- 21 Birmingham Journal 30 January 1840
- 22 See Briggs (1979) p.317
- 23 See address by Non-electors committee to 'Dissenting electors of Birmingham' Birmingham Journal 26 June 1841.
- 24 Birmingham Advertiser 1 July 1841
- 25 Birmingham Advertiser 8 July 1841
- 26 Document issued 'at a meeting of Gentlemen, Inhabitants of the Town of Birmingham, held at Dee's Royal Hotel on the 13th January 1836', a public 'PROTEST against the Proceedings of this Self-constituted Body' (BPU) it lists some 1,200 names, together with trades or occupations. BRL
- 27 From Inspector Rawlinson's Report of Trades. 1849 quoted by Bunce (1878) p.307
- 28 Quoted Briggs (1979) p.266
- 29 Gash (1969) p.145
- 30 Gash (1969) p.145
- 31 Birmingham Journal 15 July 1837
- 32 Birmingham Journal 23 September 1837
- 33 The rating districts were not the same as the Municipal wards drawn-up after incorporation, see map p.95. Though they spanned an identical area, there were twelve rating districts and thirteen Municipal wards. The outlying areas were the same i.e Edgbaston, Deritend and Bordesley, the variations occurred in the town-centre.

- 34 See Neale (1972) and Mossiter in Applied Historical Studies  
Edited Michael Drake (1973)
- 35 Aris's Birmingham Gazette 8 July 1844
- 36 Aris's Birmingham Gazette 15 July 1844
- 37 Sturge unsuccessfully contested a Nottingham Parliamentary  
election in 1842.
- 38 Birmingham Journal 15 July 1844
- 39 Aris's Birmingham Gazette 19 July 1847
- 40 Aris's Birmingham Gazette 7 June 1847
- 41 Fraser (1976) p.199
- 42 Hennock (1973) p.22. See also Jessie K. Buckley 'Joseph  
Parkes of Birmingham' 1926.



## 5. CONCLUSION

Drawing the threads together, the first point of my hypothesis maintains a positive relationship between religious affiliation and political acts in Birmingham between the years 1830 - 1850. All important political activities examined during this period had religious implications: broadly religious liberty was the dominant issue which could only be accomplished by a political act. The political strength of the BPU was provided by Dissenters seeking parliamentary reform to redress their grievances and bring equality with an Established Church. Local opposition to levying a church rate was a political act, so was a meeting in support of action in Parliament for abolition of church rates and entrance of Dissenters into Oxford or Cambridge or conversely pressure to prevent the passing of such a measure. Even the uproar caused by the so-called Papal Aggression in 1850 - though religious groups in the town were divided on the issue - nevertheless resulted in a political act of despatching petitions to Parliament. In the light of such evidence, the first part of the hypothesis is proven.

For the second part there are indications that local positions of power and privilege were dominated by members of the Anglican Church to the detriment of other denominations with sectarianism over-ruling accepted determinants like socio - economic class. Of this we cannot be sure. An important point to be kept in mind is that there was a decisive break half-way through the twenty-one years of this study; the position changed when the Municipal Corporation was elected in December 1838 and very gradually assumed power, thereby making inroads into the privileged structure that had existed hitherto. Therefore, a distinction has to be made between political and privileged power, not that by 1850 the Municipal Corporation had absorbed all the privileged positions under its jurisdiction. In Section 3 of this essay 'Attack on local Privileged Order' only one position - Governor of the Grammar School - restricted entry to Anglican churchmen and this was an arbitrary regulation. In the other eight privileged positions there was no evidence of specific religious exclusion, though other than the Court Leet, Anglicans were the dominant religion. The

balance at no time represented the religious division of the town, which was more or less evenly divided between Anglicans and Nonconformists; nor was the Nonconformists' share divided equally among the various Dissenting sects. Inevitably Unitarians had the largest proportion. Several wealthy Dissenters held three or more positions, but Anglicans were the most numerous, because it is suggested they had sufficient leisure to fulfil them and the wealth to sustain them while they did so. In this respect access to these positions was socio-economic class; put so baldly the statement begs too many questions to have much meaning, though the first part is self-evident and positions were dominated by Anglicans; other than the Governorship of the Grammar School, the determinant was not sectarianism, but socio-economic class, though it cannot be proved conclusively.

There are many factors influencing a voter's choice of candidate in a Parliamentary election; generation, neighbours, candidates past record etc.,. On the basis of those voters for whom it has been possible to identify their religious belief, that was the single important motivation, in the instance of two elections with a gap of four years. In the first of the two elections we have been able to examine in some detail, 1837, no Dissenter other than Wesleyans voted for the Tory candidate, whose entire vote other than Wesleyans came from Anglican churchmen. In 1841 several Dissenters voted Tory, but most were cross-voters, while Wesleyan support for the Tory candidate also increased. In this election the Tories considerably improved their election share, but it must be stressed this resulted from 1837 Radical voters not voting for their candidate again in 1841 - mostly Anglicans - therefore we can presume that Dissenters could not have been sufficiently aggrieved by the Whig Governments abandonment of their cause or sufficiently attracted by Tory ideology to change allegiance. There is evidence of lack of interest in Parliamentary Elections in Birmingham throughout this period; it may well be that apathy was a reaction to disenchantment with party or candidate; this applies to Anglicans and Nonconformists alike. In both elections a minority of Anglicans supported the two Radical candidates, though they were unlikely to have been High Churchmen, and religion

was probably not what influenced them in making their choice. Alternatively support for the Radical candidate was politically motivated; possibly they supported the currency formula idea in 1837, but this cannot be advanced as a reason in 1841 because Spooner was also a currency man. The likely answer was that their belief in civil and religious liberty was stronger than their devotion to Anglicanism. However such conclusions have to be qualified by the shortcomings of the sources: for both elections slightly less than 40 per cent of voter's religious denominations were discovered. There was not a similar problem designating activists in privileged positions of Section 3, because as public figures their religious belief was more readily identifiable. However identifying electors whose only excursion into historical sources was to record one vote, proved impossible. Under the circumstances one has to be content with the statement that there is a good correlation between religion and voting, but cannot be proved as exclusively significant.

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4. Craftsmen/Artisans.
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## APPENDICES.

Appendix 1.1. Clergy/Gentry/Bankers/Merchants etc., Breakdown  
of Voting in Parliamentary Elections.

	1837			1841		
	Attwood	S'field	Stapl'	Muntz	S'field	Spooner
Anglican Clergy	2	2	12	1		10
Gentlemen	50	55	62	44	46	67
Bankers	5	3	3	3	3	4
Solicitors	19	17	35	26	24	47
Surgeons	15	17	24	14	14	49
Physicians	4	4	1	4	4	5
Accountants )						
Architects )	21	22	17	21	18	29
Surveyors )						
Merchants	20	21	23	25	24	19
Factors	29	30	18	31	27	27
Dissenting. )						
Ministers )	10	11		7	7	
Catholic )						
Priests )						
Miscellaneous )						
Officials )						
Officers of the )						
Hundred Court )	21	21	11	18	14	14
Excise Officers )						
Registrar of )						
Births etc., )						
Miscellaneous )						
Professional )						
Newspaper )						
Editors )	6	5	9	6	5	8
Share Brokers )						
etc., )						
	<hr/>			<hr/>		
	202	208	215	200	186	279

Appendix 1.2. Manufacturers. Breakdown of Voting in Parliamentary Elections

	1837			1841		
	Attwood	S'field	Stapl'	Muntz	S'field	Spooner
Brassfounders	54	54	23	55	52	29
<u>Button Makers</u>						
Pearl, Bone, Glass, Gilt, etc.,	52	50	18	43	38	22
<u>Jewellery Manfrs</u>						
Gold/Silversmiths,						
Medallists	42	43	20	51	49	29
Gun Makers	28	28	18	33	31	29
<u>Ancillary Gun Trade</u>						
Barrel Forgers,						
Gun Polishers,						
Gun Lock Mfrs, etc.	18	20	5	21	17	8
Toy Makers	37	37	8	34	31	15
<u>Tool Makers</u>						
Awl, Brace, File,						
Rasp, Vice etc.,	28	28	12	32	31	14
Bridle/Bit, Spur, ) Stirrup, Harness ) Makers.	18	17	9	18	18	9
Cutlery Mfrs	10	10	3	11	12	5
Coach Builder )						
Axle Tree Mkr )	9	8	10	9	7	19
Spring/Stay Mkr )						
Ironfounder	18	17	5	14	11	10
Currier )						
Fellmonger )	13	12	9	4	4	11
<u>Turners</u>						
Ivory, Bone,						
Wood, etc.,	15	15	3	13	12	7
Japanner	16	17	5	14	12	9
Lamp Mfrs	11	12	4	13	12	5
Nail, Screw )						
Pin Mfrs )	11	13	8	11	11	9
Pen Mfrs	4	4	1	10	9	
Brush/Comb Mfrs	12	11	1	11	11	2
Wire Mfrs	10	11	6	11	11	10
Fender/Fire Iron Makers	7	7	1	7	7	5
<u>Miscellaneous</u>						
Bellfounders						
Chainmakers						
Chandlers						
Candlestick Mfrs						
Glass Makers	172	161	76	176	163	91
Hinge Makers						
Snuffer Makers						
Scale Beam Mfrs						
Sword Makers						
Thimble Makers						
etc., etc.,						
	585	575	245	591	549	338

Appendix 1.3. Traders: Breakdown of Voting in Parliamentary Elections.

	1837			1841		
	Attwood	S'field	Stapl'	Muntz	S'field	Spooner
Bakers/						
Confectioners	44	42	13	32	29	32
Boot/Shoe						
Makers	40	39	5	56	47	26
Butcher/						
Poulterers	59	56	27	41	34	59
Drapers	74	68	48	77	62	87
Tailors						
Milliners						
Hosiers etc.,						
Grocers/						
Tea Dealers	59	60	28	62	55	53
Chemists/						
Druggists	19	21	18	17	19	23
Coal Dealer	21	20	7	21	17	27
Greegrocers	11	9	3	7	7	8
Fruiterers						
Fishmongers	2	2	3	2	2	7
Jewellers	29	29	11	23	21	20
Pawnbrokers	26	28	2	26	22	12
Ironmongers	15	15	8	20	20	13
Stationers	27	28	10	44	39	29
Booksellers						
Tobacconists						
Newsagents						
Corn/Hay Dealer	14	14	13	12	9	33
Seedsman						
Hostlers, Vets						
Farmers						
Nurserymen						
<u>Miscellaneous</u>						
Wool/Rag Dealers	34	32	22	44	36	47
Furniture Dealer						
Musical Instrum't						
Sellers,						
Hairdressers,						
etc.,						
	474	463	218	484	419	476

Appendix 1.4. Craftsmen/Artisans: Breakdown of Voting in  
Parliamentary Elections

		1837			1841		
		Attwood	S'field	Staple'	Muntz	S'field	Spooner
Smiths	(Black (Copper (Jobbing (Lock (Farrier	13	11	7	9	9	9
Builders	{						
Plasters	{						
Slaters	{	44	44	27	39	31	37
Brickmakers	{						
Plumbers		6		5	7	6	14
Carpenters	{						
Joiners	{						
Cabinet Makers	{	52	48	10	38	33	25
etc.,	{						
Plater/ Caster		17	17	2	23	23	3
Clock/Watch Maker		12	12	4	9	7	7
Painter/ Glazier		9	9	4	10	9	8
Upholsterers		9	9		4	4	1
Gilder	{						
Carver	{	8	7	6	8	6	14
Stone Mason	{						
Printer	{						
Engraver	{	24	26	17	29	29	26
Book Binder	{						
Stampers	{						
Piercers	{						
Braziers	{	10	10	5	11	10	8
Pattern Makers	{						
Die Sinkers	{						
Sheet Iron/ Tin Plate Workers	{	8	8		11	9	
Solderers	{						
Semilorsers	{						
		212	201	87	198	176	152

Appendix 1.5. 'Drink Interest' : Breakdown of Voting in  
Parliamentary Elections.

	1837			1841		
	Attwood	S'field	Stanl'	Muntz	S'field	Spooner
Retail Brewers						
Beer Retailers	116	107	3	135	120	46
Licensed						
Victuallers	151	146	38	122	93	116
Wine/Spirit						
Merchants	13	13	11	11	9	13
Malsters	26	25	12	18	16	21
Coopers	10	10	1	15	15	4
Hop Merchants	3	3	1	1	1	4
Hotel						
Proprietors	1	1	3			1
Inn Keepers	1	1	3	1	1	1
Wholesale						
Brewers	3	3	2	3	3	3
Guinness Merchant	1	1				1
Cider Dealer						2
	<hr/>			<hr/>		
	325	310	74	306	258	212

Appendix 2.1. Clergy/Gentry/Bankers/Merchants etc., Erosion  
of the 1837 Votes and the Compilation of 1841

		Attwood		Scholefield		Stapleton	
1	1837 Poll	202		208		215	
2	Registered but did not vote	33		33		35	
3	Not Registered	40		40		33	
4	Votes lost to other candidates	15		17		1	
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
5	Retained Votes	114	56.4%	118	57.9%	146	67.9%
6	Votes gained from other candidates	7		2		15	
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
7	1837 Votes Realigned	121		120		161	
8	Voters not voting in 1837	79	39.5%	66	35.5%	118	42.3%
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
9	1841 Poll	200		186		279	
		Muntz		Scholefield		Spooner	

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Appendix 2.2. Manufacturers. Erosion of the 1837 Votes  
and the Compilation of 1841

		Attwood		Scholefield		Stapleton	
1	1837 Poll	585		575		245	
2	Registered but did not vote	84		82		24	
3	Not Registered	227		212		89	
4	Votes lost to other candidates	24		30		2	
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
5	Retained Votes	250	42.7%	251	43.6%	130	53.1%
6	Votes gained from other candidates	18		3		30	
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
7	1837 Votes Realigned	268		254		160	
8	Voters not voting in 1837	323	54.5%	295	53.7%	178	52.7%
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	
9	1841 Poll	591		549		338	
		Muntz		Scholefield		Spooner	

Appendix 2.3. Traders. Erosion of the 1837 Votes and the  
compilation of 1841

		Attwood		Scholefield		Stapleton
1	1837 Poll	474		463		218
2	Registered but did not vote	83		81		23
3	Not Registered	129		127		63
4	Votes lost to other candidates	48		48		1
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
5	Retained Votes	214	45.1%	207	44.7%	131 60.1%
6	1837 Votes gained from other candidate	9		2		48
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
7	1837 Votes realigned	223		209		179
8	Voters not voting in 1837	261	53.9%	210	50.1%	297 62.4%
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
9	1841 Poll	484		419		476
		Muntz		Scholefield		Spooner

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Appendix 2.4. Craftsmen/Artisans. Erosion of the 1837 Votes  
and compilation of 1841

		Attwood		Scholefield		Stapleton
1	1837 Poll	212		201		87
2	Registered but did not vote	30		32		16
3	Not Registered	84		80		26
4	Votes lost to other candidates	16		16		2
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
5	Retained Votes	82	38.7%	73	36.3%	43 49.5%
6	1837 Votes gained from other candidate	10				18
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
7	1837 Votes realigned	92		73		61
8	Voters not voting in 1837	106	53.5%	103	58.5%	91 59.9%
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
9	1841 Poll	198		176		152
		Muntz		Scholefield		Spooner

Appendix 2.5 'Drink Interest' Erosion of the 1837 Votes and  
the Compilation of 1841

		Attwood		Scholefield		Stapleton
1	1837 Poll	325		310		74
2	Registered but did not vote	68		67		5
3	Not Registered	165		102		29
4	Votes lost to other candidates	20		38		1
<hr/>						
5	Retained Votes	132	40.6%	103	33.2%	39 52.7%
6	1837 Votes gained from other candidate	1		2		37
<hr/>						
7	1837 Votes Realigned	133		105		76
8	Voters not voting in 1837	173	56.5%	153	59.3%	136 64.2%
<hr/>						
9	1841 Poll	306		258		212
		Muntz		Scholefield		Spooner

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Appendix 2.6. Unknown Occupations. Erosion of the 1837 Votes  
and the Compilation of 1841

		Attwood		Scholefield		Stapleton
1	1837 Poll	347		357		207
2	Registered but did not vote	61		65		21
3	Not Registered	169		177		41
4	Votes lost to other candidates	20		17		5
<hr/>						
5	Retained Votes	97	27.9%	98	27.5%	140 67.6%
6	1837 Votes gained from other candidate	1		7		11
<hr/>						
7	1837 Votes Realigned	98		105		151
8	Voters not voting in 1837	298	75.3%	270	75.0%	217 58.9%
<hr/>						
9	1841 Poll	396		375		368
		Muntz		Scholefield		Spooner



# TO THE PROTESTANT ELECTORS OF BIRMINGHAM.

## NATIONAL BALLAD.

### YE PROTESTANTS OF ENGLAND, &c.

YE Protestants of England,  
With one consent arise,  
'Ere again the fires of Popery  
Light up your native skies!

Rise, rise in all your Majesty,—  
Ye long have sleeping been;  
Shake off your fearful lethargy,  
And tell us what you mean!

The strife of war is coming,  
The battle is at hand;  
Let the traitor then beware who  
Betrays his injured land.

The great and good reformers  
Your bright ensamples be;  
And follow in the glorious path  
By which they set you free.

Think of you holy martyrs  
Who stand before the throne,  
Who worshipped God in Trinity,  
And worshipped God *alone*;

Who bowed not in idolatry  
Before the Virgin's shrine,  
Who kneel'd not to a wafer God,  
Or consecrated wine.

O! cherish not within your breasts  
The dormant power of Rome,  
Or ye shall surely rue the day  
Ye brought the reptile home.

The Bible let your watchword be,  
The Bible your defence;  
In all the Holy war, your trust  
Divine Omnipotence!

Like the voice of many waters  
O! let your cry be heard,  
And teach your trimming statesmen  
To fear the people's word.

*Extract from Mr. SPOONER'S Speech, at the Bell Inn,  
Bristol Street, on Tuesday night, the 20th July, 1847.*

"THE Protestant Constitution is the bulwark of our liberties; shake it, and the Establishment is not worth a whit; so far as civil privileges go, I would, most undoubtedly, give to them every thing. There is no one single civil privilege which I will withhold from them, (hear, hear) but I will not suffer, if I can help it, Protestant people to be mixed up with idolatry, (loud cheers) by furnishing the very means by which that idolatry is carried on. (hear hear) Talk to me of your Education; tell me, as Sir JAMES GRAHAM and Sir ROBERT PEEL told me in the House of Commons, that I under-rated the power of Education when I refused to give my support to the Grant for Maynooth; I was told the Papists would be educated, and being educated, they would become a more enlightened and therefore a better people. I said then, and I say it now, if I understand what ought to guide a Christian man's conduct, it is principle and not expediency, (Tremendous cheering) and never to do what your mortal, vain, frail man may conceive to be productive of good, if in itself, it is an evil. No! take that straight forward rule; I will hold out the hand of fellowship to any of those who dissent from me (hear, hear, and cheers) upon forms, or upon ceremonies, or upon what I or they may call important doctrines, I will hold out the hand of fellowship to them, as long as they are able to appeal to the same test to which I appeal,—to the pure unadulterated word of God (great applause) I appeal fearlessly to this without note or comment."

## Protestant Electors of Birmingham, VOTE FOR SPOONER!

*As you value your civil and religious liberties,*

## VOTE FOR SPOONER!

Appendix 4. Principle Activists mentioned in this essay.

AARON, ISAAC. Dentist, leading Radical in the Parish of Aston, strongly opposed to church rates; left Birmingham in 1839. Jewish.

ALLDAY, JOSEPH. Editor and proprietor of the Birmingham Monthly Argus and Public Censor 1828 - 1843. After the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829 the paper was published with a black border; imprisoned for libel in 1834. After the paper ceased publication became in turn small manufacturer, ironmonger and eating-house keeper. Churchwarden in late 1840s and very active in early 1850s as a Town Councillor. Anglican.

ATTWOOD, THOMAS. Son of Mathias Attwood, a wealthy Ironfounder who founded the Bank of Attwood and Spooner, known as the Birmingham Bank, in which Thomas became a partner. Born in Halesowen was High Bailiff of Birmingham in 1812 and MP for the town 1832 - 1839. Died at Malvern in 1856 at the age of 73. First published on the currency question in 1815. Anglican.

CADBURY, RICHARD TAPPER. Draper in Bull Street, resident in Edgbaston, very active in local affairs which earned him the nick-name of 'King Richard'. Chairman of the Street Commissioners from 1836 until 1851. Unsuccessful candidate in first Birmingham Municipal election. Whig in politics; Quaker.

CADBURY, B and J. Sons of Richard Tapper, both resident in Edgbaston, John was a confectioner in Bull Street, his brother managed his father's business next door. Both very active in the BTS; Whigs politically, Quakers in religion.

CALTHORPE LORD. George, the third holder of the title, mainly responsible for the residential development of Edgbaston, a 2,000 acre estate he owned on the outskirts of the town. Vice President of L & CA. Anglican.

DAWSON, GEORGE. Popular Baptist Minister. Active in Radical politics in the late 1840s. Ardent in improving the lot of the poor, particularly in education.

DOUGLAS ROBERT, KELLIE. Editor of the Radical Birmingham Journal from 1836 to 1844. Took active part in Radical activities in the town. Birmingham Political Union Council member 1837. Member of the Chartist General Convention, resigned in April 1839 over the issue of physical force. Member of the Scotch Church.

EDMONDS, GEORGE. A Baptist, started work as a button-burnisher, became a school-teacher, then an attorney's clerk. Editor and publisher of Edmonds Weekly Recorder; sentenced to twelve months imprisonment in 1819 for conspiring to elect Sir Charles Wolseley a 'Legatorial and Representative of Birmingham'. Defended Muntz and others at Warwick Assizes after church rate riots. When he was made 'Clerk of the Peace' in 1839 the Birmingham Advertiser remarked 'it was an odd title for such a character'. Died in 1868, aged 82.

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- HADLEY, BENJAMIN. Button Manufacturer. Guardian of the Poor 1837; Secretary of BPU. Appointed Church warden 1838 and 1839. Opposed to abolition of the Corn Laws. Elected for Ladywood Ward in 1838 Municipal Election. Appointed Alderman. Very active in Radical politics, but did not vote in 1837 or 1841 Parliamentary election. Left Birmingham in early 1840s; probably a Dissenter.
- JAMES, J. ANGELL. Congregationist Minister of Carr's Lane Meeting House. Considered somewhat moderate in religion and politics. Wrote Protestant Nonconformity - Rise and Present state of its various Denominations in the Town.
- MCDONNELL, Rev. T.M. Roman Catholic Priest of St Peters in Birmingham. Strongly Radical in politics, member of Political Union Council. Friend of O'Connell. His activities became an embarrassment to his Catholic superiors who moved him to Torquay in 1842.
- MOSELEY, Rev. Thomas, Anglican Rector of St Martin's Parish Church. Unlike predecessor very active in church affairs. After taking office delegated many central church powers around other churches in the town. Conflict over church-rates affected his health and he resigned in 1846.
- MUNTZ, GEORGE FREDERICK, Wealthy metal manufacturer of French ancestry. Though Anglican he was opposed to payment of church rates. Founder member of BPU, a Council member from its inception in 1830. Member of Parliament for Birmingham from 1840 until he died in 1857. Parliament 'looked upon him as a political oddity'. 'From time of his entering House of Commons his political and public character deteriorated.'
- MUNTZ, PHILLIP HENRY. Younger brother of G.F. Muntz. Mayor of Birmingham in 1840. Became the third Member of Parliament for the town after the 1867 Reform Act. BPU Council member from 1837. Guardian of the Poor 1837. Anglican.
- PARE, WILLIAM, Tobacconist in New Street. Owenite Socialist Secretary of the Birmingham Co-operative in 1828. Member of the Council of the BPU. Brought to trial at Warwick Assizes in 1837 with Muntz following disturbances at a Church rate meeting. A Roman Catholic.
- PARKES, JOSEPH. Attorney. Became outstanding figure in national Liberal politics. Sometime member of BPU, but did not join at outset because he was opposed to the currency doctrine of Attwood. Gave evidence before House of Commons Select Committee on Bribery in 1835. Instrumental in drawing-up the wards that comprised the Municipal Council.
- REDFERN, WILLIAM. Attorney with local firm of Redfern, Bray and Barlow. Active promoter of the Municipal Charter. First Town Clerk of Birmingham.
- SALT, THOMAS CLUTTON. Lamp Manufacturer employing over one-hundred workpeople. BPU Council member from 1830. Originally opposed to any action to repeal Corn Laws, because of his currency views. Popular among working class. Resigned from the Chartist General Convention

in 1839. Elected for St Georges Ward in 1838, Municipal Election. Nick-named Thomas Glutton Salt by his detractors. Church warden in 1832. Anglican.

SCHOLEFIELD, JOSHUA, Merchant/Banker/Manufacturer. Reputed to have been very wealthy. Member of Parliament for Birmingham until he died in 1844. Deputy Chairman of the BPU until he resigned in 1832. Active in Anti-Corn Law agitation. Anglican.

SCHOLEFIELD, WILLIAM. Son of Joshua Scholefield, Merchant, High Bailiff in 1838. Town's first Mayor in 1839. Member of Parliament for Birmingham from 1847 until 1867. Anglican.

SPOONER, RICHARD. Partner in the bank of Attwood and Spooner, started in Birmingham by his father Isaac Spooner with Mathias Attwood. Radical in his earlier days contesting elections at Warwick and Boroughbridge. Became a Tory before Reform and stood for Parliament in Birmingham in the 1835 and 1841 Elections. Was elected MP in a by election in 1844, but lost his seat in 1847 and was elected for North Warwickshire at the same election. He lived in Worcester where he was also active in politics. Brother-in-law of William Willberforce, related to Lord Calthorpe, his brother was an Archdeacon and he was a High Churchman himself.

STURGE, JOSEPH. Quaker, corn merchant, born in Bristol in 1793, died 1859. Founded the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Leading advocate of CSU. Described by Cobden as a 'doer, not a talker or writer'. Very active in church rate opposition in Edgbaston where he he lived; insisting that his confiscated property be sold by auction. Unsuccessful in attempts to be elected for Parliament in Birmingham, Nottingham and Leeds.

STAPLETON, Hon A.G. Unsuccessful Tory candidate in 1837 Election. A former Private Secretary to George Canning. 'A Commissioner of Customs for two years and a Pensioner for life'.

SWANN, THOMAS, Particular Baptist Minister of Cannon Street Meeting House.

TAYLOR, JAMES. Banker (Taylor and Lloyds) Very active in Tory politics, sometime Chairman of L & CA. A former Unitarian turned High Churchman, secretary of the Ten Church fund, which aimed to build ten new churches in Birmingham in as many years. Son of a successful gilt button manufacturer who started the banking business. Father's mansion burnt down in 'Church and King' riots in Birmingham in 1791.

WADE, DR. A.S. Rector of St Marys, Warwick, where he was often in dispute with his Curate. Friend of the working classes. Sometime BPU Council member.

Appendix 5. Those holding three or more positions of power: see Section  
(Though not necessarily all held at the same time)

ALSTON, Wm Charles	Winson Green	Brass Manufacturer	Anglican
ANDERTON, William	Whittall Street	Brassfounder	Anglican
ARMFIELD, Edward	9 Newhall Street	Button Manufacturer	Anglican
ASTON, John	St Paul's Square	Button Manufacturer	Anglican
BACCHUS, J.Ogden	4 Dartmouth Str.	Glass Manufacturer	Anglican
BARNES, Benjamin	1/2 Bartholomew Street	Cast Tinned Kitchen Furniture Mfr	Anglican
BEALE, Samuel	Newton Street	Lead Merchant	Unitarian
BEALE, William	Camp Hill	Woolstapler	Unitarian
BOOTH, John Kaye MD	20 Temple Row	Physician	Anglican
BATES, Wm.Henry	108 Snow Hill	Merchant	Anglican
CADBURY, Richard T.	Calthorpe Str.	Draper	Quaker
CADBURY, John	93 Bull Street	Confectioner	Quaker
CHESSHIRE, Barnabus	36 Temple Row	Auctioneer	Anglican
CHANCE, William	152 Great Charles Street	Merchant	Anglican
CLARK, Francis	Hagley Road	Silversmith	Unitarian
CLARK, Thomas	53 Lionel Street	Silversmith	Unitarian
COPE, John	Broad Street	Button Manufacturer	Anglican
CROMPTON, J.W.	Calthorpe Str.	Gentleman	Anglican
FRANCIS, John	Frederick Str.	Merchant	Unitarian
HARRIS, RICE	Broad Street	Glass Manufacturer	Anglican
HARROLD, William	St Paul's Square	Merchant	Unitarian
HARDMAN, John	12 Paradise Str.	Button Manufacturer	Roman Catholic
HOMER, John	12 Calthorpe Str.	Gentleman	Anglican
HORTON, Samuel	29 High Street	Silversmith	Anglican
JAMES, James	37 Bradford Str.	Screw Manufacturer	Congregationist
JAMES, Paul H.		Banker	Anglican
KEMPSON, Samuel	Summer Hill Terr.	Floor Cloth Manufacturer	Anglican

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
KEY: See page 122										
6		X		X	X		X		X	
6		X		X			X	X	X	
6				X	X			X	X	
6	High Bailiff		X	X				X		
6						X	X	X		
6				X	X			X		
2	Mayor	X	X	X				X	X	X
2		X	X	X		X		X	X	X
6		X		X		X	X	X		
N/V			X	X	X					X
4		X		X		X		X		X
4				X		X		X		X
6				X	X	X				
N/V	High Bailiff	X		X		X		X	X	
2	Councillor	X		X				X	X	
2	Low Bailiff	X	X	X				X		X
6				X			X	X		
2		X	X	X				X		
2	Low Bailiff		X	X				X		
			X	X		X		X		
N/V	Alderman			X	X	X				X
N/V	Councillor			X	X			X		X
6			X	X				X		
6				X	X				X	X
2	Mayor/LB	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
	High Bailiff	X	X	X		X		X	X	
6	High Bailiff		X	X	X					X



KNOTT, Thomas	Moseley Road	Editor of <u>Birmingham Gazette</u>	Anglican
LAWRENCE, John T.	Greenway Terrace	Gentleman	Unitarian
LANE, Joseph	3 Great Charles Street	Gold/Silver Beater	Anglican
LANE, Thomas	29 Terrace	Japanner	Anglican
LEDHAM, Daniel	Summer Hill Terr.	Nail Manufacturer	Anglican
LEDHAM, Joseph F.	Harborne Road		Anglican
LUCY, William	Bath Row	Miller	Anglican
MALINS, David Jnr	Great Charles Street	Brassfounder	Anglican
MOORE, Joseph	10 Cambridge Str.	Gentlemen	Anglican
PENBERTON, Thomas	Warstone Lane	Brewer	Anglican
PEYTON, Abel	Andover Street	Manufacturing Chemist	Congregationist
PHIPSON, William	Westbourne House	Metal Roller	Unitarian
RAWLINGS, Samuel	Hagley Road	Currier	Anglican
RYLAND, Thomas	109 Snow Hill	Tea-Urn Manufact'	Unitarian
SCHOLEFIELD, Joshua	Minories	Merchant	Anglican
SCHOLEFIELD, William	Minories	Merchant	Anglican
SHAW, Charles	Harborne Road	Nail Manufacturer	Anglican
SHARP, William	Cannon Street	Brassfounder	Anglican
SMALL, Thomas	27 Paradise Str.	Paper Tray Maker	Dissenter
SPOONER, Richard	New Street	Banker	Anglican
STOCK, Joseph	Cannon Street	Glass Warehouse	Anglican
TAYLOR, James	Dale End	Banker	Anglican
TINDAL, Charles		Manager of Bank of England	Anglican
TURNER, James	Snow Hill	Button Maker	Anglican
TWELLS, P.M.	84 New Street	Plated-Wire Manufacturer	Anglican
UNETT, John W.	Old Square	Attorney	Anglican
WALKER, Joseph	Crescent	Gentleman	Anglican
WELCH, Fr. Isaac	15 Bromsgrove Str.	Leather Manufact'	Anglican
WHATELEY, George	41 Waterloo Str.	Attorney	Anglican

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
5	Dead				X		X		X		
5	5	Alderman	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
5	6				X	X			X		X
5	6	High Bailiff			X	X			X	X	X
5	6	High Bailiff	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
5	N/V		X				X		X	X	
5	2	Mayor			X	X			X		
5	6	High Bailiff		X	X	X			X		X
5	6				X		X		X		
5	6	High Bailiff		X	X	X			X	X	X
2	2	Low Bailiff		X	X				X		
2	2		X	X	X				X	X	X
5	6		X		X	X			X		X
2				X	X					X	X
2	candidate		X	X	X	X			X		X
2	N/V	Mayor		X		X			X		X
5	6		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
2	2	Mayor	X	X	X				X	X	X
5	6				X				X	X	
2	N/V			X	X				X		
3	Cand		X	X			X		X	X	
5	6				X			X	X		
5	6						X	X	X	X	
5	6				X			X	X		
5	6	High Bailiff			X	X	X		X		
5	6				X		X		X		X
5	6						X	X	X		
2	2		X	X	X		X			X	
5	6	High Bailiff		X		X			X		X
5	6			X	X		X				

Key to Columns 1 - 12 on pages 119 and 121.

- |        |     |                                                    |
|--------|-----|----------------------------------------------------|
| Column | 1.  | 1837 Parliamentary Election (How activist voted)   |
|        | 2.  | 1841 Parliamentary Election    do.    do.    do.   |
|        |     | 1. Attwood (1837)    Muntz (1841)                  |
|        |     | 2. Attwood and Scholefield (1837)                  |
|        |     | Muntz and Scholefield (1841)                       |
|        |     | 3. Attwood and Stapleton (1837)                    |
|        |     | Muntz and Spooner (1841)                           |
|        |     | 4. Scholefield.                                    |
|        |     | 5. Scholefield and Stapleton (1837)                |
|        |     | Scholefield and Spooner (1841)                     |
|        |     | 6. Stapleton (1837)    Spooner (1841)              |
|        | 3.  | Highest Municipal position held between 1830 - 50. |
|        | 4.  | Magistrate                                         |
|        | 5.  | Court Leet                                         |
|        | 6.  | Street Commissioners                               |
|        | 7.  | Court of Requests                                  |
|        | 8.  | Governor of the General Hospital                   |
|        | 9.  | Governor of the Free Grammar School.               |
|        | 10. | Trustee of the Savings Bank                        |
|        | 11. | Assay Guardian                                     |
|        | 12. | Guardian of the Poor.                              |